WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH POPULAR SCIENCE?

# The Saturday Review of Literature

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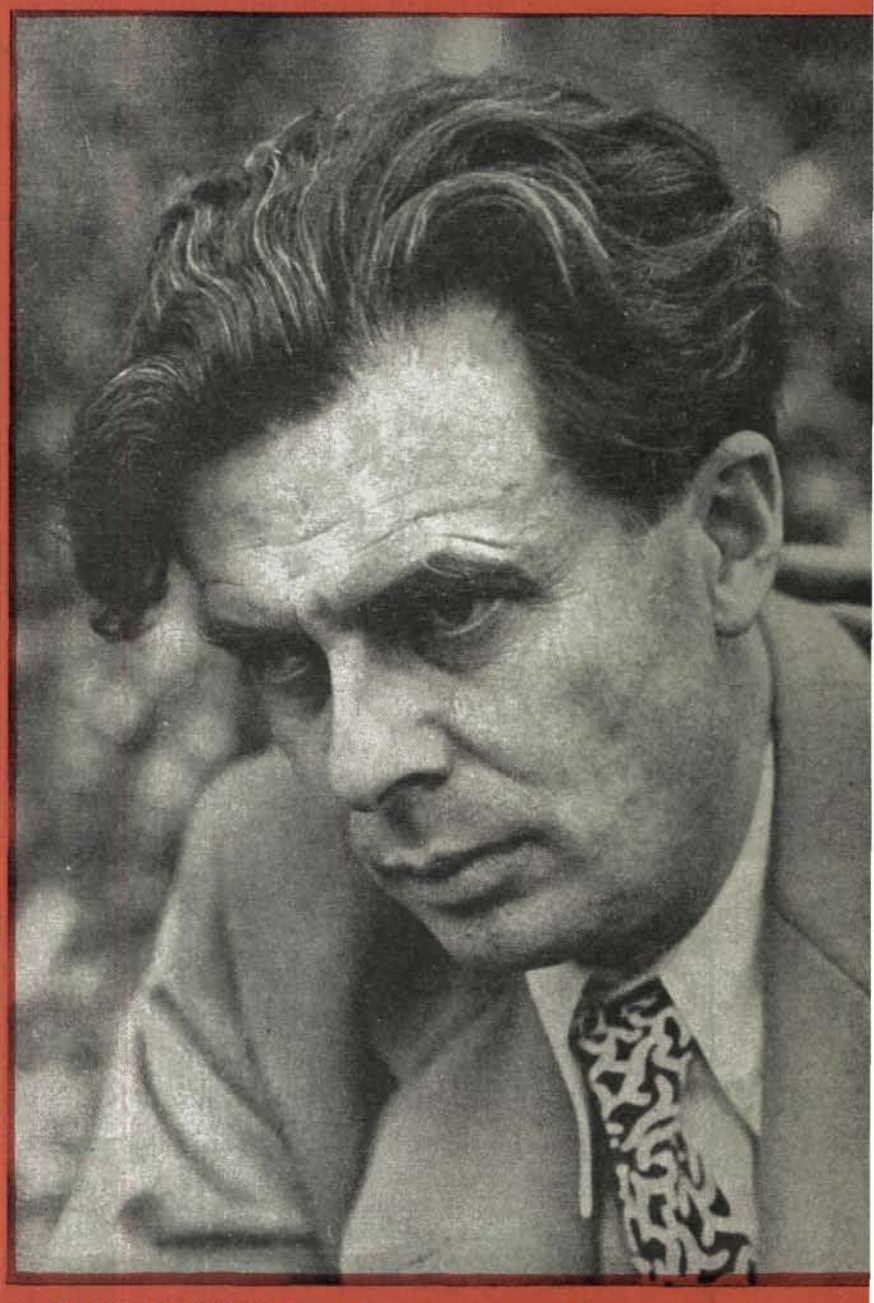

ALDOUS HUXLEY: "It is that strange mutt of literature, a novel of ideas. And the idea here is that Time is essentially evil" . . . *(See page 3)*

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## *By "The Baker Street Irregulars"*

# ***221B:*** *STUDIES IN SHERLOCK HOLMES*

*edited by* VINCENT STARRETT

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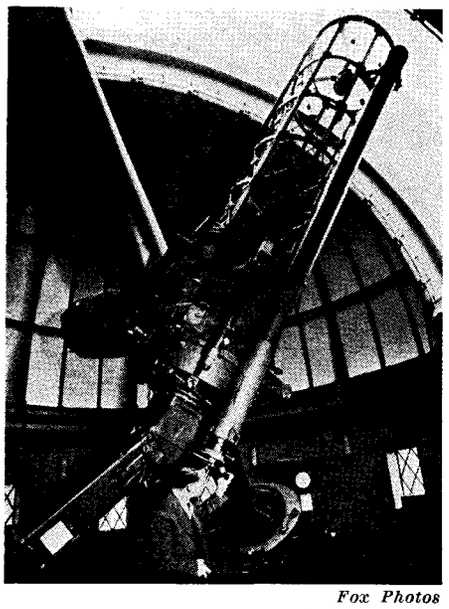
# What's the Matter With Popular Science?

BY GEORGE RUSSELL HARRISON

NO book has yet been written which conveys to the layman a wholly accurate idea of either the occupations or the preoccupations of the scientist; if anyone ever learns how to write such books, the layman who reads one should find his lay qualities dropping from him like a Faustian cloak. In the meantime, however, the public is watching avidly for readable and understandable books which will convey at least a correct impression of what scientists are about in these days when their activities bode so much good or ill for the race. One book after another on "popular science" appears, yet most of these fail to interest more than a few thousand readers, while of those which do attain a comparatively wide audience, many are likely to be criticized by scientists as distorted and misleading. Science popularization involves inherent difficulties which no writer appears yet to have overcome completely; even when an author does produce a book on popular science which can be considered truly successful, he usually comes a cropper in a second attempt.



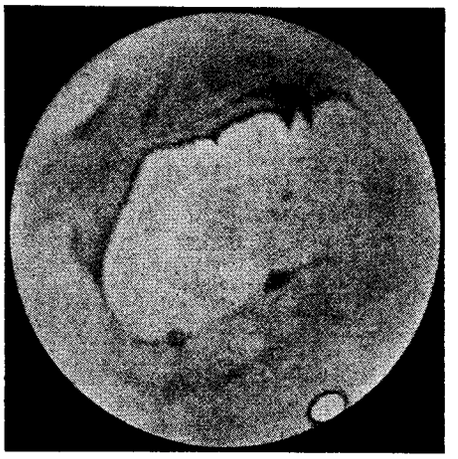
*Fox Photos*

**Thirty-six inch reflecting telescope at Greenwich observatory. (Photographs on this page from "Science Marches On," by Walter Shepherd—Harcourt, Brace.)**

Much of the difficulty arises, of course, because in such books logical matters must be introduced psychologically, and writers who combine the dissimilar talents which are required for such a combination can be expected to be few. Able scientists usually make poor popularizers because their instinct is to sift out every grain of truth regardless of how bored their audience may become; able writers are likely, in their preoccupation with the selection, digestion, and presentation of material, to over-simplify scientific matters.

Widest in its appeal at present is the "wonder book" type of science popularization, in producing which a number of modern writers have developed considerable technical skill. The author, usually a journalist, though occasionally a scientist, first selects a group of scientific advances which lend themselves well to dramatization. From a dozen hard-working researchers on each particular scientific problem he chooses one—either the leader of a group, the perpetrator of the most newsworthy discovery, or the man with the shaggiest hair—and around him, his laboratory, and his work writes a story packed with human interest. The treatment is usually subjective and personal, and the style is likely to be somewhat breathless, with rows of three dots inserted periodically to indicate that the excitement of the reader has now been raised to such a pitch that he must *ad lib* for a moment, as the author cannot assume further responsibility. The events described are illuminated with a floodlight thrown very much from one side, which increases contrast, arouses interest, and produces good reading of the "quickie" variety, though it seldom results in worthwhile literature. Medical subjects, for obvious reasons, lend themselves best to over-popularization of this sort.

Almost as successful are books which possess "snob appeal." This is not to say, of course, that all books by well-known scientists which have sold well have done so because of this factor. A surprising number of men prominent in science, particularly Englishmen, have possessed to a marked degree the gift of popularization. But every publisher knows of the books kept ostentatiously on living-room tables, seldom touched and never read, there because they are the books which intelligent persons everywhere are supposedly reading.



**Mars with North Polar cap, two "canals" and four "oases."**

A number of books by famous scientists are well-written and authoritative, but are marred by the very understandable and human penchant of their authors for introducing naïve philosophical, mystical, religious, sociological, or other extraneous considerations into otherwise authoritative descriptions of atoms and universes. The views regarding Eternity of an expert on Infinity are likely to have little more relevance or foundation in true knowledge than those of a motion-picture actress advertising the best make of automobile. This is not to say that such opinions are not of interest to the public, or worthy of publication in their proper setting—the protest is merely against the assumed transfer of authority from fields in which the writer is an expert to fields in which he is not. That such habits can survive may result from the fact that in some fields of inquiry there are at present no real experts. This might make it seem legitimate for the scientist to step in, but unfortunately the type of expertness required is far different from that to which he is accustomed.

This habit has been indirectly en-

## Next Week

AS A DRIVEN LEAF
By MILTON STEINBERG
*Reviewed by Fletcher Pratt*

NO MORE GAS
By CHARLES NORDHOFF AND JAMES NORMAN HALL
*Reviewed by Oliver LaFarge*

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couraged by reviewers, who, regardless of their expertness at ordinary literary criticism, show little interest in properly criticizing writings on popular science. The high-class professional reviewer, since he can in any case consider only a small percentage of the books which cross his desk, usually throws up his hands at the whole science category, and turns over the reviewing of popular science books to that worst of all possible literary critics, a scientist. This individual is likely to be competent to pass only on the accuracy of statements in a book and not at all on its merits as a popularization; if he is himself a writer of popular science, his judgment is often subtly warped by a sublimated form of professional jealousy. As a result of all this, present-day reviews of books on popular science are as standardized as those in any branch of literature. Most usual is a review of the "modified rave" type, packed with enthusiastic adjectives of the sort Wilson Follett calls "Literish." Then, to show that the reviewer is on to his job as a critic, vigorous exception is taken to certain minor conclusions. If there are no conclusions to which exception can be taken, it is usually safe to bemoan the fact that the author has failed to tell how his science will affect religion, or social morality, or economics. Therefore, in his further books the author attempts to make such side-excursions.

Why scientists, and especially science popularizers, should be expected to tell the world how it will react to science remains a mystery. It is now fashionable to berate scientists for not worrying about the social effects of their discoveries, and even for making these discoveries before someone (the sociologist, or the cleric?) has investigated the effect of the prospective discoveries on the world. This is like warning the first carpenter that he must not invent the hammer until the effects of mashing his thumb with a hammer have been thoroughly investigated. Man developed skill with hammers by pounding with them and learning how not to mash his thumb; at the moment, science is helping to kill hundreds of human beings as our infant society plays with its bomb-dropping airplanes, but there are millions of other people leading useful and contented lives who could not be alive on this earth at all were it not for this same science. Books about the effect of science on human welfare are needed, but it seems reasonable to expect them to be written by experts on both science and human welfare; science popularizations should be written by experts on science and popularization.

Are there any such experts? There are, even in the physical sciences, though the popularizer of chemistry, mathematics, or physics faces a much more difficult problem than one working with the medical and natural sciences, who in turn has a harder problem than the historian, the sociologist, or the economist. A student in any one of the latter three fields works of necessity with books, and can be expected to develop literary leanings. The talents of the experimental physicist or chemist usually are more akin, and properly, to those of an advanced electrician or plumber than to those of a literary man. Most workers in the basic sciences are concerned either with the determination or the utilization of facts, and only incidentally with their dissemination; when such a scientist shows literary leanings, it is usually an accident of circumstance.

An outstanding success in the popularization of physical science, at once authoritative, interesting, and free from confusing and irrelevant material, will serve as an example to which science popularizers may well look. The late Edwin E. Slosson wrote "Creative Chemistry" at the close of the World War, and since that time the total distribution of this book is said to have exceeded half a million copies, perhaps half at the hands of the Chemical Foundation, and the remainder as ordinary sales. This book tells a true and exciting story so simply, so sincerely, and so enthusiastically that the mere recital of man's conquests of nature through the medium of chemistry grips the reader to a degree which is rare indeed in this sophisticated age.

Another eminently successful popularization is Lancelot Hogben's "Mathematics for the Million." For the person with an ordinary amount of mathematical training this book has astonishing interest, fitting as it does the various elementary branches of mathematics into an orderly, simple, and appealing whole. The same author's later book, "Science for the Citizen," though still remarkable as a piece of scientific writing, seems less successful as an attempt at popularization because of its over-attention to detail of one type, and lack of generality, and because its very size brings it into the "ponderous tome" class.

An excellent recent book which suffers from the same defects is Hyman Levy's "Modern Science."* This is an authoritative and scholarly exposition of some of the basic facts and philosophy of mathematics, physics, and astronomy. The author is concerned with the philosophical implications behind physical phenomena and with the interrelations between them. Since this approach is a legitimate and desirable one, the book should perhaps be exempt from consideration in the present connection, yet the direct appeal to the layman on the wrapper indicates that "Modern Science" is intended by its publishers to be considered as a popular book. This fact may be connected with the difference between lay tastes in England, where the book was written, and in America. Because the language and attitude of its author are those of a college professor who is attempting to make a number of fairly abstruse relationships clear merely by expressing them in logical fashion, it may be doubted if the book will appeal to a wide lay audience here. Viewed as a popular book, it seems to suffer from a lack of definiteness at one moment, and from a surfeit the next, while its few apparent concessions to popular style form an all-too-thin mask over the stern face of pedagogy.

All this is intended to be criticism of Professor Levy's book only as a popularization; as a survey of the unity underlying certain aspects of modern science (though its title is far too inclusive) it is spectacularly successful, particularly in relating the development of science to the social background.

Another excellent book, but one which shows to some extent the deficiencies of the "wonder book" technique, has recently come from the expert pen of J. D. Ratcliff. In "Modern Miracle Men,"† Ratcliff has restrained himself more than is customary on the part of many popularizers, and has probably avoided so overdoing the heroics of his "miracle men" as unduly to prejudice the intelligent reader. He has written a fast-moving, exciting account of some of the recent advances in medicine and agriculture; yet, though he has been carefully accurate in the facts and interpretations presented, his book must still be taken as a dramatization for the reader's benefit.

An outstanding example of distortion through high-lighting is the chapter on hydroponics, or the growing of plants without soil. The work of W. F. Gericke is recounted in excellent jour-

(*Continued on page* 14)

**MODERN SCIENCE: A Study of Physical Science in the World Today. By Hyman Levy. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1939. 736 pp., with index and 160 illustrations. $5.*

†*MODERN MIRACLE MEN. By J. D. Ratcliff. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1939. 311 pp., with index. $3.*

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# Time and Aldous Huxley

*AFTER MANY A SUMMER DIES THE SWAN. By Aldous Huxley. New York: Harper & Bros.* 1940. 356 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE CATLIN

THE Aldous Huxley of "Crome Yellow" expressed, as perhaps no other writer has done, the spirit of the 1920s, a spirit negative, disillusioned, and relaxed. He did not follow the 1920s into the mood of the Marxist 1930s, when youth identified idealism with revolution and economic toughness. He remained apart, like Job, meditating on humanity as Dr. Zuckermann meditates on Apes' Hill. The earlier spirit persisted beyond its season, became septic and gangrened with time. Mr. Huxley, best loved disciple of D. H. Lawrence, became a moralist, a new Juvenal and a new Swift, but there was an evil relish in his satire. He served us with a delicacy like a medlar, to be eaten when rotten. He satirized sexuality with an Arnoesque exaggeration.

"After Many a Summer" is the story of a wide-eyed English pilgrim, Mr. Pordage, quiet scholar of letters, who finds himself precipitated into the midst of the human fauna of California, ranging from the industrial baron in his castle, who owns a commercial crematorium, to the poor Joads at his gate. Amid vivisectors, murderers, and devotees of longevity, varied by sensuous ladies and adolescent idealists—such as Pete, who fought in Spain—Pordage, the scholar for scholarship's sake, finds Propter, the quietist philosopher. The kernel of the book lies in the contrast of these characters.

Superficially "After Many a Summer" is a study in the same colors as before, incredibly erudite, precious with "Chippendale words," full of references to Molinos, St. Peter Claver, the Marquis de Sade, and Josiah Royce, admixed with descriptions, bright as new paint, of castles in California and Yosemitic seductions. The effect is oddly vulgar. Even the positive pacifism would appear to be lacking which characterized Huxley in his third period, when he and Mr. Gerald Heard—Heard of "The Social Substance of Religion"—were as David and Jonathan.

All that does show itself is Mr. Huxley as crown prince in the dynasty of H. G. Wells, heir to the socio-scientific novel. "If you read old Schneeglock's work and the stuff they'd been publishing at Upsala, you'd know some of the sterols were definitely poisonous—much more so than chloresterol." All that is purest Wells.

This, I submit, is the obvious judgment on the present book. It is, I believe, a superficial judgment. "Literature," says the philosophic Mr. Propter in "After Many a Summer," is chiefly alcohol and cantharides." Plato said that earlier, and profoundly I believe Plato and Huxley to be right. It may even be that the vulgar is best exposed vulgarly. But whether Huxley does himself justice by trying to sell philosophy to the nit-wits by seasoning it with aphrodisiacs, I leave to him to judge. I doubt it. I don't think this garnishing will make Mr. Huxley's disquisition on the essential nature of Time any more palatable to those who believe that the test of significant truth is its lucidity to the glance of a mental twelve-year-old in a hurry. It is of course sad that this should be so; but it is so. "A significance new not in respect to the entities connoted by the words, but rather

**"Mr. Pordage, quiet scholar of letters, finds himself precipitated into the midst of the human fauna of California" . . . (Decoration from "California: A Guide to the Golden State.")**

in the mode of their comprehension, which, from being intellectual in character, had become intuitive and direct, so that the nature of man in his potentiality and of God in actuality was realized by an analogue of sensuous experience" . . . If this is what Mr. Huxley means, it is well that he should say it. But he will only with difficulty escape being read by enraged critics their customary homily on ABC lucidity. It is not easy to explain to a mankind that demands its intellectual food peptonized why Pascal was right in distinguishing the human plane of living from the eternal, or just why Tithonus should pray about human day-after-day immortality, "Release me, and restore me to the ground." But I do not see that an injection of the style of the Marquis de Sade helps matters, in the context of what Mr. Huxley wishes to do. Those who want the food will take it without this dish . . . although for those who do not want the bolus, the method of getting them to take it is perhaps as good as the old one of Diogenes Laertius with his Lives and Loves of the Philosophers.

What does Huxley seek to do? It is to recall to our minds that there is a technique of the spiritual life which Eckhart and Loyola, in their different ways, sought to practise. The excellent life is by definition aristocratic. So good a democrat as Mahatma Gandhi has found it such. When the Protestant Revolt liquidated the monasteries, which were professional "workshops of souls," it was a catastrophe to civilization. Mr. Huxley would have us hark back by some Catholic-Quaker route. But indeed his philosophy is far older and more elaborated than that of Catholic mysticism. It is that of the Hindu Sankara and again of Buddha. And Mr. Huxley is its *guru* and apostle. One can no more belong to this church thanks to half an hour spent reading in an arm chair about the Fifth Earl of Gonnister, aged two hundred odd and clad only in the Ribbon of the Garter, leaping on his troll, than Gandhi could become Mahatma by reading smart literature.

Mr. Huxley re-expounds the old Buddhist doctrine of the Wheel of Life. His preoccupation is not really with castles in California or even with the circumambient Joads. This is not a novel of action. Its characterizations are after the style of Sears, Roebuck. It is that strange mutt of literature, a novel of ideas. And the idea here is that Time is essentially evil. Satire worthy of Donne or Swift is poured on the merely human, biological quest for long life. The true good is the quest for eternity, realizable now.

It is, however, Mr. Huxley's own affair how he chooses to express his ideas. What matters is that he has ideas of the first importance to express. He knows literature in the sense of *Belles Lettres* as a connoisseur, and very properly has a contempt for its pretensions. He is the best of our political philosophers. He is the only man today rewriting St. Augustine in letters of hell-fire. He does not fall into the lethal modern heresy that there is no pure or abstract truth, nor does he hold that, because we should all do good, it is the intellectual's task to "serve at tables" or to rewrite history to forward a Cause, whether it be that Goebbels is always right or that Trotsky never existed. That was poor Pete's error in this book. Huxley, speaking by the voice of Propter, grasps that there is a structure of the nature of things, spiritual as also physical, superbly independent of our lusts and wishes, as unconcerned as Spinoza's God about how we feel about It. But in the comprehension of It lies our peace. There also lies the secret of that serene disinterestedness which is the sole pure well, *una sola sancta,* whence flow, not murders and dictatures and wrath, but equity and social justice. Here is to be heard, by those who are willing, a still voice that searches the conscience.

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# Nonage of an Iconoclast

*HAPPY DAYS. By H. L. Mencken. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.* 1940. 313 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

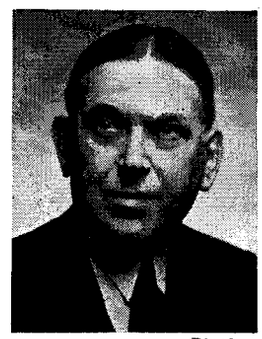
MAYBE Mr. Mencken is as much an item of the past as Bryan or a buggy whip. Certainly some of us feel time blowing hot on the back of our necks when we face the fact that the prophet of our youth, who taught us in outlandish irreverence out of his "Prejudices" and the *Smart Set,* has turned to his memoirs and is facing his sixtieth birthday. A sad truth is that neither the sage of Baltimore nor ourselves are proof against Anno Domini. But it is a pleasant truth that the sage has not succumbed to solemnity nor grown shriller in his scolding. Mencken remains—and mellower. Indeed, I think that in looking back in a combination of tenderness and Katzenjammer to the fat baby and skinny boy he was in the first dozen years of his participation in the affairs of this universe on Hollins Street in Baltimore, he has made something more richly and honestly appealing than anything else in all the admitted 10,000,000 words behind him.

It is a little hard at the outset to think of Henry Mencken even at seven or eleven as young America. His brilliant and bombastic irreverence in the twenties has made him seem more a phenomenon of a time than a person proceeding normally from cradle to grave. He was fixed in an age as an alternative to Bryanism when Bryanism was in its least productive and most decrepit stage, and also sometimes its least intelligent. Mr. Mencken became its noodle-cracker and sometimes very hilariously made the noodle sound very empty. The tragic result was that when Bryan died at the end of the vaudevillian Scopes trial over evolution, this particular Mencken seemed only to go out of date. But he deserves a better fate than women's hats or popular songs. There were other Menckens besides this noisy if useful one. He remains a great scholar of our language, able critic, first-class newspaperman, and also a human being who had and remembers an American boyhood in the best bad tradition of American boys—a city boy this time, well fed and still free in the resounding streets of a cobblestone and iron-rimmed age. But I am not sure whether this book about that boyhood is most important because in it H. L. Mencken has brought to us the young Henry he was or because it may mean the welcome escape of H. L. Mencken from one reel of intellectual slapstick in which he has been too much and unjustly confined.

**H. L. Mencken at the age of eight**

The answer is not essential to the enjoyment of the book. What is the basis of the book's delight is that the Baltimore of the days when Cleveland was President and soft crabs sold for two and a fraction cents a piece and the Confederates hated the Yankees and the colored folks were afraid of the body-snatchers who served the advance of medical science, is miraculously seen again through the eyes of a secure young savage of the more fortunate bourgeoisie. The remembering Mr. Mencken is present, of course, witty, irreverent, prejudiced, in his own proper person as writer. But the processes of learning in F. Knapp's Institute, the details of juvenile gourmandizing, the rhapsodies of rural visits, the fear of the cops, and the educating contacts with the Negroes and evangelical Sunday Schools all come, if a half a century later, out of the combination of the mild matter-of-factness, goose pimples, and unsuppressed excitement of the very young Henry himself.

It may be the intention of Mr. Mencken to write more autobiography beyond these first twelve years. It should be good entertainment. It will give us more facts about Mencken and the universe. But it will certainly not be necessary to the picture of the man. That is all here: the skepticism of Grandfather Mencken in his Gladstone collar and cravat; the solemn mercilessness of Henry's father's brand of humor; a faith in the tribal customs of his own clan of the "Baltimore bourgeoisie" and their good life as his father provided it out of the cigar business and his mother made it, with the help of a succession of hired girls, in the Hollins Street house; a good strong dash of sentimental faith in an excellent world which should not be tinkered with by anybody without the best reasons. Mr. Mencken, the Autobiographer, left the tobacco business for the press (having stained his fingers on one his father bought him), but he took that commerce's virtues—and vices, if any—with him. He was provided the press with no better copy than his book. There's as much pleasure in it as in any cigar the earlier Menckens made out of the best Pennsylvania tobacco.



*Pinchot*

**Mr. Mencken today**

# Japan from Inside

*RESTLESS WAVE: My Life in Two Worlds. By Haru Matsui. New York: Modern Age Books.* 1940. 252 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HAROLD HENDERSON

THIS book, by Haru Matsui (Mrs. Eitaro Ishigaki), is an extraordinary and very moving document. Of this there can be no question, whether or not one agrees with the author's fiercely-felt convictions about the social and political problems of Japan.

The book is primarily an autobiography. It starts with the author's earliest memories, and the first three quarters of it tells about her growth to womanhood until she came to America in 1930. The later part is both interesting and important, but it is not confined to personal experiences, and hence lacks the vividness and the direct simplicity that make the earlier Japanese scenes a part of the reader's own life.

The story is told almost as a series of episodes, and on looking back it is surprising how many of these are "firsts." There are the birth of the first brother; the first offering at Mother's spirit-tablet; the first sight of Second Mother; the first present given "to herself alone"; the first lessons, particularly the tea-ceremony one; the first visit to a factory; the first night in the slums; the first arrest (for "dangerous thoughts") and the first experience of a police station;

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**Haru Matsui: "the *haiku* . . . consists in transferring the writer's emotion to the reader . . . by giving a short, clear sketch of the external conditions that aroused it" . . .**

the first meeting with the husband-to-be; and many others. The aliveness of the telling may be due in part to this number of "firsts," for the author was not only "inordinately self-willed," as her father called her, but had the temperament that met all new things as adventures. Yet this is an insufficient explanation of the book's compelling appeal, for there is nothing in it more poignant than Mrs. Ishigaki's loss of her second child.

Some of the credit must go to the literary traditions of Japan. These are seen not only in the general plan of the book, the interlarded poems, and the curiously expressive Japanese turns of phraseology, but also in the method used to rouse emotion. This is the time-honored approach exemplified in Japanese poetry, particularly in the *haiku*—those seventeen-syllable poems whose shortness requires the utmost economy of means. It consists in transferring the writer's emotion to the reader, not by describing it directly, but by giving a short, clear sketch of the external conditions that aroused it. This method has been used so successfully that the reader feels that he is seeing Japan from inside, with a Japanese personality, not that he is looking at it from the outside, like a stranger.

In conclusion it must be said that "Restless Wave" is frankly propaganda—propaganda for the people of Japan and fiercely against its present government. Like all propaganda, it must be tested for honesty and bias. The honesty is here, and while bias is here also, it is bias that has been honestly and naturally arrived at. The book is an important one for all who are in any way interested in Japan—or in human nature.

*Harold Henderson is in the department of Chinese and Japanese at Columbia University.*

# Drawing-Room Comedy

*CAROLINE OF ENGLAND: An Augustan Portrait. By Peter Quennell. New York: The Viking Press.* 1940. *259 pp., with index.* $3.75.

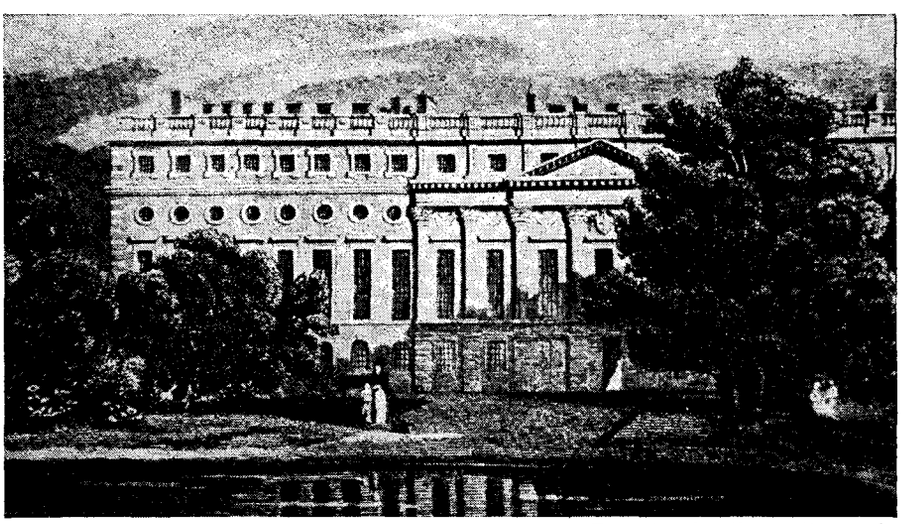
Reviewed by JOSEPH R. STRAYER

THE Hanoverians were a dull lot, even in their vices. Their family quarrels were vulgar and their amorous adventures were depressingly business-like. It may seem strange that a biographer who has recently studied the vivid personality of Byron should choose the consort of George II as the subject of his next book. But it is this background of dullness which lends interest to the story of Caroline and her friends. Compared to her father-in-law, husband, and son, Caroline was an intelligent and attractive person. Compared to the heavy, Teutonic court, Caroline's friends seem almost Gallic in their wit and sophistication.

Mr. Quennell has not given us a formal life of the queen. Rather we have an eighteenth-century comedy—the comedy of a clever woman who managed her husband for over thirty years and never let him know that he was being managed. George II was stupid, brutal, and suspicious. Yet Caroline, by a remarkable mixture of tact, complaisance, and perseverance controlled almost all his activities, and so gained the power which she desired above everything else. In playing this delicate game she had one great advantage; her husband loved and admired her above all other women. His sentimental life centered in Caroline, while his mistresses experienced all the monotony of matrimony with few of its rewards. The queen encouraged this attitude, and there is something irresistibly comic in the king's complaint that Caroline forced him to pay regular visits to Lady Suffolk, who was old, deaf, and ugly, but had been his mistress from his youth.

Caroline was aided in her efforts to control the king by two men who form a strange contrast, the bluff and vigorous Walpole and the refined and effeminate Hervey. Walpole's alliance with the queen is easily understandable. By assisting her he gained the royal support which enabled him to remain prime minister for over twenty years—an English if not a world's record. Hervey, who was a master of intrigue, must have appreciated the skill with which the queen worked, but it is remarkable that he never betrayed her as he did his other friends. Nothing shows Caroline's ability more clearly than the fact that she was able to retain the support of two such different men.

A perfect drawing-room comedy has no place for social issues. Mr. Quennell shows us Augustan England as the court saw it—a unique, but not wholly satisfactory point of view. Events and personalities are distorted; even Walpole appears more a courtier than a politician, and politics is discussed only when it affects the great game which the queen was playing. The people of England were an annoying and incomprehensible element which the court ignored as far as possible. When the people rioted over the collapse of the South Sea Bubble or against the Excise, they had to be considered, for they threatened the intricate system through which the queen exercised power. In ordinary times they were considered unimportant. As in all eighteenth-century comedies the value of the book is not in its plot, but in the brilliant portraits of the characters: George I, George II, Frederick Prince of Wales, Walpole, Hervey, Pope, and Caroline herself, "la grandissime comédienne" of all.



*Engraving by Shury after Neale*

**Hampton Court: from "Caroline of England."**

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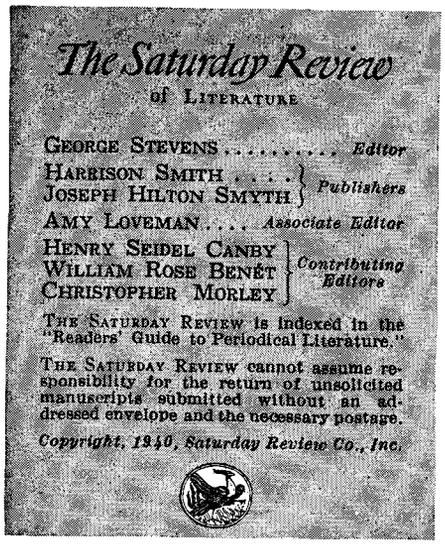
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## Fiction and Life

A fruitful manifestation of contemporary literary criticism is the attempt to relate literature with life. That attempt gives considerable interest to a new book by David Daiches, "The Novel and the Modern World."* Mr. Daiches looks at English fiction, through some of its eminent figures, during what he considers a period of transition, including the first four decades of this century. The novelists whom he discusses are Galsworthy, Conrad, Katherine Mansfield, Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Aldous Huxley. (Why not D. H. Lawrence?) To each of these, except Joyce, Mr. Daiches allots a single chapter; Joyce gets three chapters, including a penetrating analysis of "Finnegans Wake." Fore and aft of these are essays on "Selection and Significance," "Character," and "Fiction and Civilization."

In brief, Mr. Daiches takes the position that these writers, and others of the same period, suffer from a peculiar handicap: the lack of an audience with a fixed set of conventions and beliefs in terms of which writers might address them. Novelists of other periods—Fielding and Richardson, Dickens and Thackeray—have been able to take for granted a prevailing point of view among their contemporaries, a matrix of accepted ideas in terms of which communication was facilitated. Since the Victorian age in England, particularly since the first World War, there has been no general agreement on fundamental values. One result is that the novelists of this era have been obliged to give a great deal of attention to the problems and the technique of communication. Mr. Daiches ingeniously applies this idea to each of the writers under discussion. It explains why Galsworthy was successful in "The Forsyte Saga," where the background of his characters is stable; unsuccessful in its sequels, where the characters live in a progressively vacuous medium and become progressively vacuous themselves. It is a key to the introspective, impressionistic art of Katherine Mansfield, where the subtlety of the material renders the problem of communication paramount. It is the reason—or a reason—for the development of the stream-of-consciousness in Joyce and Virginia Woolf.

All this Mr. Daiches sets forth ably, often brilliantly. And, in the case of each of the writers under discussion, he has a great deal more to say. Others have, to be sure, pointed out the limitations of John Galsworthy; but among the younger critics, few have been as willing as Mr. Daiches to recognize the value of what Galsworthy could do within those limitations. His comparison of Aldous Huxley as a frustrated romanticist with T. S. Eliot as a frustrated classicist is first-rate. His appreciation of Katherine Mansfield is penetrating and subtle. With an important reservation, one can say a good deal for his chapter on Joseph Conrad. There is not much that is new in the essay on "Ulysses"—how could there be?—but the essay on "Finnegans Wake" is second only to Edmund Wilson's long critique of that work-no-longer-in-progress. And the chapter on Virginia Woolf is as good as some of Mrs. Woolf's own "Common Reader" essays. No one else has shown more clearly the progressive dominance in her novels of form over content.

> "To the Lighthouse" represents what one may call the Virginian compromise to perfection. Virginia Woolf has . . . compromised between her refining intellect and the real world by taking into her study aspects of experience which suffer least in that environment. . . . "To the Lighthouse" represents that state of unstable equilibrium which most really good minor artists achieve but once in their careers.

But when Mr. Daiches leaves off being a critic and becomes a sociologist, he not only loses much of his power to convince; he also perpetrates more than one dubious theory. The lack of persuasiveness derives from a certain assumption he makes, in common with the Marxists (though he is much more intelligent and less dogmatic than most of them). "The history of the twentieth-century novel," he writes, "will always have added interest because of the cultural transition that is taking place in our time—the gap in the background of belief and the paving of the way toward a new background." That is all to the good; but Mr. Daiches assumes throughout the book that the new background will turn out to be Marxist in character. In line with this assumption, which remains unacceptable to many otherwise intelligent people and unprovable in any case, he castigates some of the novelists under discussion for writing in their terms instead of his. This is bad criticism. It emerges particularly in the essay on Conrad, which—in spite of the evidence it gives that Mr. Daiches is perfectly capable of understanding Conrad—is the weakest chapter in the book. "If we agree," says Mr. Daiches, "that two of the main factors that determine human conduct are, first, the nature of the group life and the relations with other men that it entails, and, second, the physical, natural environment in which men live—in other words, economics and geography—we can see Conrad as a rare example of the author who has chosen to consider the latter, considering the former only when it has been modified, even de-

*THE NOVEL AND THE MODERN WORLD. By David Daiches. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1939. 228 pp., with index. $2.50.

# Southern Trip: Buzzards

BY LOUIS STODDARD

THE highway quivers at noon like a ribbon
stretched in the wind. There is no wind.
In the high hot sky the buzzards swim slow circles.
Their shadows flicker along the pines and go
before us down the road.
The road runs level through barrens and pines,
by vacant cabins chinked with clay,
their clay-mortared chimneys awry,
their full-voiced people, those early morning singers,
gone from the fields where no longer the sunrise
tints the cotton pink.
No wood smoke climbs the ladder of light and shadow
from cabins among gold-shafted morning pines.
The buzzards are shrewd. They know we are passing by.
They pivot away on tilted wings; their shadows
tumble over the gullies.

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termined, by the latter." Well, we do agree; that is, indeed, an excellent statement. What we do not agree to is Mr. Daiches's further proposition that this makes Conrad an "outsider," an "exotic," or that Conrad is, for this reason, otherwise to be disparaged. On the contrary, it is Conrad's strength that he is capable of seeing man in relation to the elements; that his attention is on the constant and fundamental rather than the variable and superficial; that he is interested in the sailor under the wind-clouds, the sailor making peace with his own soul, not the sailor in Local 376 of the International Maritime Union.

And Mr. Daiches's point of view does at one point, as heretofore suggested, lead him into a howler. Ingeniously, far too ingeniously, he explains that in this age of transition, when fiction has retreated from life, the slogan of "Art for Art's Sake" was invented to pacify the bourgeois, to make him feel that the artists and writers were not going to do him any harm. Shades of James McNeill Whistler and Oscar Wilde, who made the slogan ring round the world because they were trying—and succeeding—to *épater* the bourgeois, not to pacify him!

In short, Mr. Daiches's book reveals him as an excellent critic as long as he is working from the particular to the general, an implausible theorist when he tries to make writers conform to what he thinks they ought to be doing. All this suggests that the attempt to relate literature to life—an attempt which deserves every encouragement—is still in its pre-Baconian stage, and that it may begin to get somewhere when it takes facts more seriously than dogmas.

# Letters to the Editor

## More about Sophia Hawthorne

SIR:—Even the risk of the fallacy of contemporary omniscience should not keep us from another friendly chuckle at Sophia Hawthorne's pedagogic Victorianisms. We have seen her maternal eye keen in behalf of her children's nursery rhymes*; it was still more alert to their adolescent training.

Particularly there was sturdy Julian, a member of Mr. Sanborn's school for boys and girls in Concord, an advanced school indeed, for its curriculum included dances, picnics, boating parties, dramatic entertainments, social visits, town hall gatherings, etc., in all of which Julian participated with true co-educational zest. But Mrs. Hawthorne saw the reverse side of the tutorial tapestry, and finally could not restrain her impulse to write Mr. Sanborn such disapproval as she felt.†

She informed him bravely that Mr. Hawthorne and she were "quite appalled by this *flaring open* of girlhood and boyhood, when they ought to remain delicately folded up in quiet, reserved manners." It was no light matter. "I suppose you know," she continued, "that we entirely disapprove of this commingling of youths and maidens at the electric age in school. I find no end of ill effect from it, and this is why I do not send Una and Rose to your school." In momentary compunction she paid Mr. Sanborn a sweet compliment, but followed it with a renewal of the charge: "It is not we alone who think it is not wise to throw these children into each other's arms, as it were, every day; and often more than once a week they are literally thrown into each other's arms, by being allowed to waltz together—not in the stately Spanish fashion." Her own brothers had had a more suitable schooling, she added. "Instead of going to midnight dances, and using golden hours in conning silly plays for theatrical action, they studied gravely like Stoics, and never saw young ladies but as distant goddesses."

We know that Mr. Sanborn bore patiently with his latter-day Jeremiah, and so shall we, suspecting as we do that the next century will have its laugh on ours, and on similar grounds, though with a remove and a slight change.

MAX COSMAN.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

*The Saturday Review of Literature, December 23, 1939, p. 9.

†"Hawthorne and His Friends." By F. B. Sanborn. The Torch Press, 1908, pp. 13-17.

## No Logomachy

SIR:—Should there be a set technique for doing Double-Crostics? Well, it all depends. It would seem, in the process of solving them, that what troubles one man's conscience allows another to sleep peacefully.

For instance, it has never occured to me to cringe over filling in the spaces with a "ferreted" definition! My motto is, "Fill 'em as you ferret 'em." In fact, I find more pleasure in building words in the quotation, than I do from getting the definitions.

After all, I'm just an ordinary person and I don't feel that I could spring most of those words on my friends. As for looking up words, there I have a peculiar code of ethics. I would feel guilty about consulting an encyclopedia, an oddity that is flavored by the fact that I do not possess one.

Anyway, let's not have a logomachy over it. Let's just do them, by look or book, and enjoy ourselves.

RUTH TIPTON STALEY.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

## Encyclopedic Crutches

SIR:—Double-Crostic Fan Will Irwin raises a question (about encyclopedic crutches) similar to that of the poker amateur: When does one bluff? The answer: There's times to and times not to.

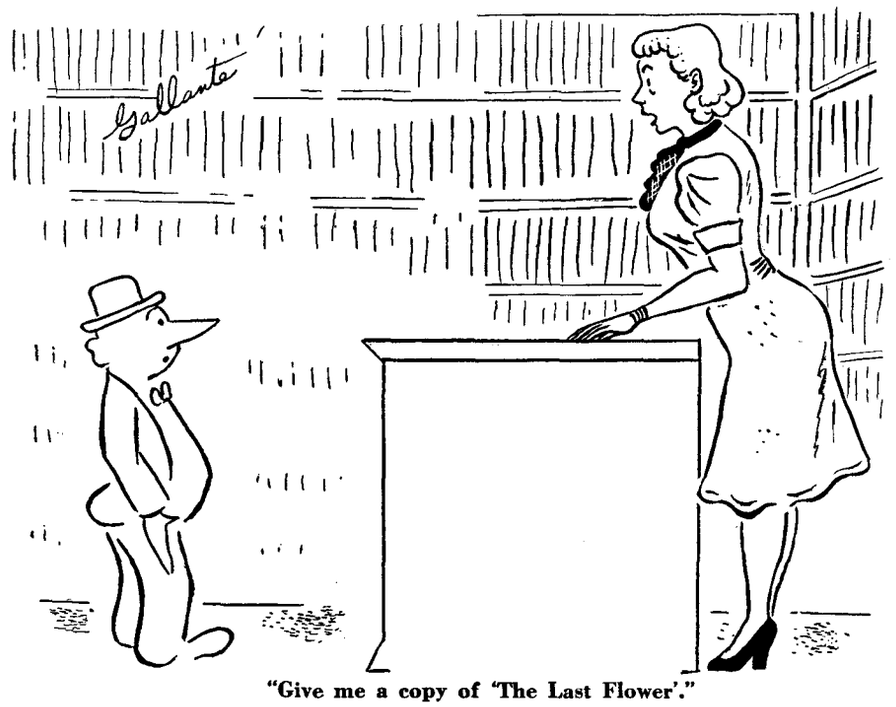
This fan (in the outfield) has been addicted since No. 14 swam into his kennel. A dictionary, thesaurus, and a Bulfinch were near by, just in case it became time to call the bluff, but by and large they work themselves out. You know how it is.

There was a neighboring addict who never started without all the adjuncts. Her work chair she placed by her Britannica. She became less of a neighbor when she found we used less time for the operation, and customarily without reference.

To Mrs. Kingsley: I hope she can give us thousands and thousands more.

HAROLD F. SMITH.

Kalispell, Mont.




"Give me a copy of 'The Last Flower'."

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# Exploring the Story of Columbus

*CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. By Salvador de Madariaga. New York: The Macmillan Co.* 1940. 524 *pp., with index.* $4.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

FOR the last thirty years every scrap of pertinent evidence in the case of Christopher Columbus has been in, but the flood of controversy over it shows no signs of diminishing. Was he really a Genoese, or a Gallegan, a Catalan, a Portuguese royal bastard, a Jew? Was he a pirate, an honest navigator, or a little-traveled, smooth-tongued woolworker? What made him so cocksure about sailing west—an Italian map, the reports of Portuguese sailors, something he found out "north of Iceland," or just reason and imagination and faith? And what did he really expect to find to the westward—Cipango and Cathay and the Golden Indies, or merely some unexploited islands? How much of a liar was he, himself, and how many lies and forgeries are there in the earliest accounts of him? Probably none of these questions will ever be settled beyond the shadow of a doubt, but—or perhaps we should say, and so—scholars and plain cranks go on endlessly arguing every phase of the Columbus question, generating in their multiple frictions a good deal more heat than light.

**Oldest Known Portrait of Don Cristobal Colon**

If a committee of historians had been charged to find an arbitrator for this international Donnybrook, they could not have hit on anyone better than Salvador de Madariaga. Mole-like industry will do to unearth facts, but it takes insight and wisdom and imagination to understand them. The ideal interpretive historian should be part poet, part philosopher, and part man of affairs—like Señor de Madariaga—and if he is at once a Spaniard of the Spaniards, and one of the most international-minded of Europeans, if he has had twenty years of experience at the council table, much of it spent in sifting and weighing evidence in intricate international disputes, and is, in addition, a gifted writer and an enthusiastic amateur of the whole wide field of Renaissance history and literature, he is more likely to do justice to Christopher Columbus than if he had spent a lifetime mulling over ancient parchments. Madariaga has handled only a few of the actual documents, but he seems to have mastered every significant scrap of the printed literature, and out of it, and out of his experience of affairs and insight into character he has produced a portrait of Columbus which, one is tempted to say, is more solidly satisfactory than any since Washington Irving.

The new portrait is scrupulous in respect of the sources, but bold in its decisions. What the sources tell us about Columbus is full of contradictions, puzzles, and ambiguities. Most scholars have attacked the problem by throwing out or ignoring some part of the evidence. They have declared that the Admiral, himself, was an unconscionable liar, or, alternatively, that the earliest life of him, by his son, contains impudent forgeries. Madariaga proceeds on the assumption that, except for occasional reticence, Columbus always told the truth about himself, and that the apparent contradictions in the sources can be solved on reasonable hypotheses. In part this restores the older conventional picture of the Discoverer. But much of the new portrait depends on one bold departure. The problem is to reconcile the documents showing Columbus's Genoese birth with the many bits of evidence which have led scholars to doubt it. Madariaga believes that, although Columbus himself was born near Genoa, and the documents about his immediate family are incontestably authentic, his ancestors were Jews—possibly converted Jews—who migrated to Italy from Valencia or Majorca on account of the local persecution in the 1390s and who retained in their new home their Spanish speech and the memory of their earlier name—Colon or Colom. On this hypothesis, a hundred little puzzles of philology, psychology, and behavior fall into their proper place—cease to be puzzling, and become illuminating. The arguments of the score or more of writers who have maintained that Columbus was a Spaniard or a Jew cease to clash with the Genoese documents, and provide a key to much in the Admiral's enigmatic character. There is no positive proof to substantiate this guess—probably there never will be any—but it is not inconsistent with any of the facts, and, as Madariaga presents it, it is so plausible and explains so much that most readers will be convinced.

They will be convinced because the book as a whole carries conviction. The wit, the learning, and the common sense with which each point in the difficult argument is carried are subordinated to the growing picture of the man which emerges from it. Madariaga never forgets that he is telling the story of a great adventurer and a unique adventure. In his hand it is as fresh and as exciting as if it had never been told before, and its hero is a rounded human being, compellingly vivid and alive. If you have room beside Washington Irving's classic on your shelves for only one modern biography of Columbus, this should be the book.

# Stoic Childhood

*THERE WERE NO HEROES. By George W. Ogden. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.* 1940. 263 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

THE impulse to recapture the idea of America as a society in the making has animated much of the best writing that has been done among us during the past decade. Ever since the year 1929, when the wish-fulfillment foundations of faith crumbled beneath us, novelists, biographers, poets have been exploring the past in search of a richer knowledge of ourselves.

This desire to know where we have been, in order to understand better where we are going, has stimulated the interest in unassuming autobiography. Typical of this enormously appealing kind of American record is George Ogden's "There Were No Heroes." It is the humorous, intuitive account of the flowering of a boy's intelligence.

During most of the years of a long life, Mr. Ogden has been a strenuous newspaper editor and story-teller. But that is not the period of his life that he has undertaken to recall. What he wishes to do is to offer the image of himself as a physically lean, emotionally hungry boy living on a Kansas farm. The way of life was, in many of its details, meager and ungenerous. Young George lived stoically under the shadow of an elder brother's sadism. No nourishing affection came to him from either parent. When he was kicked into unconsciousness by a mean mare, when he tumbled into an open well, when he was buried alive in a sand-slide, his mother, trained to look upon hardship as the portion of man, regarded each rescue with more of abstract awe than of personal relief.

Yet even in this narrow world, his poetic imagination was growing. When an elder sister told the child that

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General Grant lighted his innumerable cigars with five-dollar bills, the remnant of which were carelessly tossed away, George followed the track over which the soldier's train had passed looking for these souvenirs of grandeur. But this naive yearning after the improbable was matched, in his shrewd young mind, with an intuitive understanding of reality. The gross vitality of his Aunt Jo, the tragicomedy of village feuds, the pathos of man's hopes and fears—these homely stimuli led him early into maturity and helped him to produce verse of touching appeal. The flowering of this gift helped him to escape from the drudgery of the farm and the railroad gang into the sanctum of the *Kansas City Star*.

The great attractiveness of Mr. Ogden's book lies in its revelation of how, out of emotional hunger, may be born understanding and compassion of a fine and sturdy sort.

# In the Lineage of "Jurgen"

*HAMLET HAD AN UNCLE. By Branch Cabell. New York: Farrar & Rinehart.* 1940. 271 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

SOME eight years and seven books ago, Mr. James Branch Cabell dropped the first of his Christian names; and the books he has produced as Branch Cabell have been so different from, and so inferior to, those signed by James Branch Cabell, as to make one feel that there must be something in the science of numerology. But now he proves at last that he does not need the vibrations of "James"; he has returned, in everything but his signature, to the days of "Jurgen" and "The Silver Stallion." His new book is a retelling of "The Hystorie of Hamblet," that translation from Belleforest which causes scholars to dispute whether it was derived from Shakespeare's play, or Shakespeare's play from it. It tells the crude story which Shakespeare transformed, as Aeschylus did that of Orestes, by making the hero a highly civilized man faced with the obligations of the saga period. Belleforest's and Cabell's Hamlet is a ruthless Norse barbarian, moving competently through a tale of Viking blood-feuds; he triumphantly kills Fengon, who corresponds to Claudius, makes himself king, then proceeds through two more chapters of murder and intrigue, in which he is involved with his maternal uncle Wiglerus, Prince of Denmark—who is the uncle of Mr. Cabell's title, and the real hero of the book. Or perhaps the real hero is the character called Orton, who moves through the book like Mephistopheles, assisting this Revenger's Tragedy with advice, and gently remarking that he admires no human quality more than honor, which demands all these murders.

That, you remember, is in the mood of "Jurgen," and so is the manner of calculated incongruities. Mr. Cabell tells his story of primitive brutality in a manner of frivolous cynicism, letting his savages converse in the manner of drawing-room comedy, or speak of their blood-sacrifices to Odin as if they were the decorous rites of an established church. All the old Cabellian qualities are there: the delicate skepticism which denies all values except the pleasures of the flesh; the cultivated disillusion which sighs that the flesh grows sad; the naughty humor, swathed in an insistent elegance, which emphasizes its naughtiness as one silk stocking emphasizes nakedness. It is always skillful and readable, often highly witty. It is quite as good, for what that is worth, as "Jurgen."

But it is a dizzying question to ask oneself exactly how much that is worth. "Jurgen" is a good book, and "Hamlet Had an Uncle" is a good book; but trying to recollect the reasons why "Jurgen" made such an earthquake when it appeared is like trying to recall the logic of a dream. Of course, "Jurgen" was exactly suited to the silver-gilt twenties; in that era of illusion, its disillusion seemed profound wisdom, and to that parvenu epoch its ostentatious urbanity seemed enviable. And yet one is still left wondering why it was supposed to be self-evident that the stock of a corporation was worth a hundred times its yearly earnings, and that "Jurgen" was a masterpiece. "Hamlet Had an Uncle" is as good, but no one will call it a masterpiece; it is nevertheless a brilliant piece of entertainment.

# Miss Hull's Experiments

*EXPERIMENT. By Helen Hull. New York: Coward-McCann.* 1940. 320 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ROSEMARY CARR BENÉT

THIS is a collection of four short novels, or four long short stories, however the reader prefers to think of them. The title of the book has a twofold significance. It is the name of the last, and best, story in the group. It also undoubtedly refers in the author's mind to the experiment she is making in a length half-way between the short story and the novelette. There are ideas that one can honestly say fall between the two categories. They need a careful setting of the scene, a detailed background, a leisurely approach or more development than is possible in the circumscribed limits of the short story. On the other hand, blown up to a full-length novel, they do not carry. Pared down, they lose something; expanded, they lose more.

*Geo. Maillard Kesslere*
**Helen Hull**

Miss Hull's examples of this form are workmanlike and interesting. Only one, "Food for Thought," might possibly have been cut to a briefer form without loss. All four are set in the contemporary scene. "With One Coin for Fee" is a feminine version of the grasshopper and the ant. The ant is Margaret Turner, who pulls herself up from poverty to a respectable middle age as a hard-working school teacher. Her friend, Susan Lathrop, the grasshopper, is less circumspect. She goes through life recklessly squandering her money and her emotions, but managing to enjoy herself. Although the two women have been separated for years, their lives interweave, and they meet the same fate in the end. "Food for Thought" is well observed, but the slightest one of the collection. It is about a nice, prosy, domestic professor who becomes temporarily dazzled by society and suffers through a deadly dinner party. "Snow in Summer" is an amusing account of a Middle Western housewife who wins a prize novel contest. She is married to a dentist and is a contented wife and mother until fame interferes. The author describes feelingly what happens in New York to a new-found celebrity. The last of the group, "Experiment," is very good indeed. It is a study of a large and varied family group which finally produces an authentic genius. The attitude of the relatives to their phoenix is full of mixed emotions. Old resentments, regrets, and jealousies crop up, and there is disapproval mingled with the admiration. Miss Hull manages to give an effective little case history in the curious workings of heredity and the nature of genius, in this one.

These stories have all appeared in magazines, so there must be a place commercially for this longer form. "Experiment" presents four readable, well-constructed tales.

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# I Know He Was Right

BY CHRISTOPHER LaFARGE

Anthony Trollope

FROM time to time in the course of the last year or so, I have asked my acquaintances if they have read Trollope: but I rarely find that they have done so. Occasionally they admit to a brief reading in him dating back to school or college days; but this reading has never led them to pursue his novels further than that prescribed amount. The majority of those I have asked know him only by name. I find this curious in a day when Jane Austen's work is acceptedly classical and, in spite of that, popular; in a day when whacking long books, sometimes in two or three volumes from England or America, in ten or twelve volumes from France, are widely read; in the day of Dreiser, Rolland, Thomas Mann, L. A. G. Strong, Thomas Wolfe, Hervey Allen, Margaret Mitchell—all of whom have dropped their oversized babies into our receptive laps.

The matter remains as it was, however, and in spite of the fact that people are content to read long books, they don't read Trollope. That's a pity. It is a pity for the reader and more particularly for the writer, since the one is missing entertainment and the other, instruction, from a series of novels that have excellence of form, a clear delineation of character, living conversation, and quiet humor. Perhaps the easiest and clearest way for me to explain the novels of Trollope to those who have missed them is to say that it is nearly impossible to skip through them: long as they are, replete in the most intimate and minute details of the existences he depicts, they are nevertheless so closely written that any attempt to skip through them confronts the reader at once with the fact that he has lost a thread of the plot, a key to the situation. Of itself, that is no small achievement in the technique of novel-writing. Can you say it of many of those I have mentioned above?

Now I am not prepared to give a literary diagnosis of the complete works of Trollope in detail. I have an inaccurate memory for names, and to be reasonably convincing, should have to reread all of the novels, which now are but generally remembered in my mind. The list of his work is so long, too, that this article could not comfortably embrace all of them, and I should find myself floundering in the indecision of so rich a choice of examples. I have, therefore, taken one but little-known example of his work, and I hope by this discussion of it to influence someone to read it or reread it: I am sure that if I succeed, I shall have started that reader off on a long track of pleasure, and if he be a writer, of profit. The example I have chosen is "He Knew He Was Right."

Somerset Maugham in the introduction to his recent "Tellers of Tales," that astonishing compendium of short-story writing, touches with his usual clarity and brilliance of diction, on the modern concern of authors to depict the relation of people to their environment rather than their relation to one another. He says:

> The result of this is that they are likely to suffer from a certain shortage of material . . . presently you will have said all you can on the subject, and then you are obliged to look for some other environment. It is a grave handicap . . . The only subject that is inexhaustible is man.

That is inescapably true. And it was the relation of one person to another that interested Trollope above all else; "He Knew He Was Right" is full of that concern.

Yet, it is a notable fact that in Trollope, as in Jane Austen, the environment chosen in any of their books, although secondary in importance, is so peculiar in our eyes, so singular in its sharp difference to all that we now know and see, that it adds a flavor to the reading similar to that which we taste when reading about the home life of the Eskimos, or of one of the less-known tribes of the lower Mississippi. The conventions that governed human conduct—conventions adhered to or rashly departed from—are more remote in time than those we have learned of the Egyptians or the Greeks. I have often puzzled my head over why this should be so, and have concluded that it is because so much of what is said is similar, so many of the emotions of these characters are our own, expressed in our language, that the lesser differences of their conventions of conduct strike us with more force than the obviously-must-be-different conventions of a time long past.

However that may be, the environment of such a novel as "He Knew He Was Right" is of an interest beyond its original purpose, letting us see in full scale the eternal motives of humankind turned and shaped by the machinery of their outer lives, a machinery strange to us. One could indeed read this book with profit for the sole purpose of discovering how Englishmen behaved in the 1860s. One would scarcely recommend this as a reason to any one save some student bedeviled by the necessity of a thesis, but the fact remains true. Although the novel concerns itself primarily with the careers of well-to-do people living in London and the county town of Exeter, and in general unoccupied save by their complex personal relations to one another, one is given before the end so clear a picture of the complications of human existence when idleness promotes only an interest in one another's affairs, as one may not find short of the Kentucky mountain novels. It is equally true that no student of English Parliamentary history can afford not to have read at least one of the political novels of Trollope—perhaps "Phineas Finn," for a single choice. He will find there,

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depicted with vivid realism, the day-by-day machinery of political intercourse and intrigue that resulted in the larger issues to which history books usually confine themselves.

Anyone who has read in Jane Austen will remember the singularity of the conventions under which her characters moved and spoke, and how it took an adjustment of the mind, for the first chapter or two, to digest such unaccustomed matter. Did anyone, like myself, begin with "Emma?" But they will remember, too, that once the usage of her times had become clear and accepted, the rest of the book, and of all of her books, was as easy and natural as possible. Of "He Knew He Was Right" this is equally true. One must adjust to the peculiarities of the time, but once the adjustment is made (and the peculiarities are no fault of the author), the actions, the thoughts, the speeches of the characters, fall into place with a fine naturalness and reality. Beyond that, the very rigidity of the conventions of the time, the stable rigidity one might say (though then as now the elders of the book complain bitterly of the fact that the world is going to the devil since the good times of their own youth departed), have added something to the story: I find no better way of explaining what I mean than by a comparison to Chinese drawing, in which the conventions of the art produced an excellence since lost with a greater freedom in the choice of technique.

**Salisbury Cathedral—presented, in Trollope, under other names. (Reproduced from "The Landscape of England": Scribners.)**

But it would be a mistake to think that this difference in convention is of primary importance or even an important obstacle to enjoyment. It is not. One must swallow, to be sure, a paragraph like this:

> As he thought of it all it seemed to him that if she would not obey him, and give him this promise, they must be separated. He would not live with her, he would not give her the privilege of his wife, if she refused to render to him the obedience which was his privilege. The more he thought of it, the more convinced he was that he ought not to yield to her. Let her once yield to him, and then his tenderness should begin, and there should be no limit to it. But he would not see her till she had yielded. He would not see her; and if he should find that she did see Colonel Osborne, then he would tell her that she could no longer dwell under the same roof with him.

This from a husband to a completely innocent wife of two years' standing, the mother of his son, who had received two or three visits from one of her father's oldest friends. To be sure, Colonel Osborne was a bit of an old beau! The Ishma Kishma Indian puts aside his Ishma Kishma wife because she *wouldn't* wear a nose ring.

Nevertheless, there, briefly told, is the kernel of the main story of this novel: the progress of a man's unbalanced mind from silly jealousy to madness. That a man should begin his suspicions and his cruelties on such grounds is nothing: the essence of the matter is that every further step is believable, real, true. The progress of Louis Trevelyan from an idle, rich, good-looking, affectionate husband, to the mad invalid whose death was made premature and miserable by his own weakness, is in the grand manner. The sorrow that he visits on his wife Emily, which her goodness could not alleviate, which her own understandable obstinacy made worse, is movingly told throughout. And it is fully told. Nothing is spared, nor skimped. The story moves, always—slowly, to be sure, but always the heaped-up detail is germane to the plot of it.

Louis and Emily Trevelyan: one does not easily forget them, nor their tragedy, inevitable and human; so human indeed, that its progress is the same as the progress of any other falling-out between any man and any woman in any time. For 1940, it would need but a different original quarrel: but the progress of a quarrel fed by insane pride and high-spirited obstinacy is the same for all classes and all times. Viva Reno!

Around the central theme, which is never allowed to be of less than major importance, are woven a series of minor themes, illustrated by a dozen important characters, each sharply differentiated; and all of these minor themes are closely linked to each other as well as to the story of the Trevelyans.

Perhaps the most notable of the characters, after Louis and Emily Trevelyan, is Miss Jemima Stanbury, an old lady of a dominating character, embroiled in a fine feud which she clings to tenaciously. She can be good, kind, generous, and loyal, or she can raise hell for no reason greater than her own prejudice. Whatever she says, it has warmth and reality. I like particularly this typical conversation held with her niece Dorothy Stanbury, while Jemima was awaiting the arrival of young Brooke Burgess (to whom she proposed, for conscience's sake, to leave her considerable fortune):

> "I don't think he is come after all," said Miss Stanbury, looking at her watch. Had the train arrived at the moment that it was due, had the expectant visitor jumped out of the railway carriage into a fly, and had the driver galloped up to the Close, it might have been possible that the wheels should have been at the door as Miss Stanbury spoke.
>
> "It's hardly time yet, aunt."
>
> "Nonsense; it is time. The train comes in at four. I dare say he won't come at all."
>
> "He is sure to come, aunt."
>
> "I've no doubt you know all about it better than any one else. You usually do." . . .
>
> "The train might be ten minutes late, Aunt Stanbury."
>
> "Yes;—and monkeys might chew tobacco. There;—there's the omnibus at the Cock and Bottle; the omnibus up from the train. Now, of course, he won't come."
>
> "Perhaps he's walking, Aunt Stanbury."
>
> "Walking;—with his luggage on his shoulders? Is that your idea of the way in which a London gentleman goes about? And there are two flies,—coming up from the train, of course." . . .
>
> "Perhaps they are not coming up from the train, Aunt Stanbury."
>
> "Perhaps a fiddlestick! You have lived here so much longer than I have done that, of course, you must know all about it." Then there was an interval of another ten minutes, and even Dorothy was beginning to think that Mr. Burgess was not coming. "I've given him up now," said Miss Stanbury. "I think I'll send and put them all off." Just at that moment there came a knock at the door. But there was no cab. Dorothy's conjecture had been right. The London gentleman had walked, and his portmanteau had been carried behind him by a boy. "How did he get here?" exclaimed Miss Stanbury, as she heard the strange voice speaking to Martha downstairs. But Dorothy knew better than to answer the question.

One is tempted to quote more: to give samples of the lively and acid conversation (unfailingly amusing) of Priscilla Stanbury; of the speeches (alas!) of the American Minister at Florence, Mr. Spalding of Boston; or the diatribes of the poetess (the Republican Browning) Wallachia Petrie. But though I must limit the quotations, I should like to cite one example of technical perfection: the dinner party given by Miss Stanbury for Brooke Burgess. The slippery Mr. Gibson was present among others, and was put next to Dorothy Stanbury that he might further the suit her aunt had favored. Trollope declares (bravely) that Burgess was the "life of the party"—and he gives you almost nothing of what was said: confining himself to the description of the noise of the diners' laughter, the delight of Miss Stanbury. It is convincing and contagious—it leaves one with the feeling that Burgess was high-spirited, daring, good fun, attractive—and yet he is scarcely quoted! The explana-

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tion for so dangerous an experiment in writing is that Trollope wrote the entire scene through the eyes and ears of Dorothy, whose attention had necessarily to be upon the boring and disliked Mr. Gibson. One gets of that dinner only what Dorothy managed to get, in snatches, almost by stealth. The achievement is amazing, for it is hardly necessary to point out that nothing is more likely to antagonize a reader than to say that Mr. X was amusing and give no sample of his wit. And the successful perfection of this scene is unique neither in this novel nor in the others.

The truth of the matter is that Trollope had the capacity and the sympathy to draw real people. He avoided, with care, the error (too often committed in the propaganda novels of today) of painting his angels all gold, and his devils all black. Because his interest, then, centered in the creation of human beings, he falls neatly between the extremes of realism and romanticism, neither straining to make a happy ending, nor to manufacture a tragedy, but allowing his characters to arrive at the destination their qualities and circumstances most likely would predict for them. If there is no possible hint of the Russian that was to affect all of us, neither is there any hint of Disraeli; and propaganda is as properly absent from his books as from those of Jane Austen. Even the propaganda of Dickens has proved to be but the framework on which his true merits are supported.

A great writer, Trollope. An accomplished novelist, a proper craftsman. To read him now will repay anyone: and I believe that the trend back to the pure delineation of character, the reassertion of the premise that the interesting matter is man and not his environment, has begun, and will find him again among the authors it is not only necessary but delightful to know.

## What's the Matter with Popular Science?

(*Continued from page* 4)

nalistic fashion; the bulky, baggy-clothed professor, puttering with his seeds and solutions and producing gigantic tomato plants under glass, is an appealing figure. Every statement made in the chapter is no doubt true, but much that might change the picture has been left unsaid. It is always necessary to remember that in scientific writing of this sort the "heroes" are usually played up as symbols by a deliberate or unconscious selection of facts. The justification for this is, of course, that if no such selection were made the reader would get a distorted idea of the facts in any case, owing to his own inability to perceive heroics through their prosaic human covering. Books in which this is overdone soon become dated, however.

Mr. Ratcliff has fine material to work with. Killing air-borne microbes with ultraviolet light; the attacks on pneumonia, influenza, and the common cold; the production of anti-tetanus vaccine; the story of vitamines; brain-bathing—these subjects are all filled with human interest, and the author has made the most of them. Yet the book reminds one raised in the laboratory of a glass of cider drunk at a roadside stand on a hot day after the apple season is over—it fulfills its purpose and produces tingles as it goes down, but one just can't help resenting that slight taste of benzoate of soda.

A factor which complicates "wonder-book trouble" is overstriving for up-to-dateness. Scientists in the past were loth to discuss their discoveries in popular fashion until these had withstood the test of time, experiment, and argument; recently, however, they have been subjected to so much criticism for being non-coöperative with an interested public that this reticence has to some extent been broken down, with results both beneficial and injurious to the cause of science.

That scientists cannot themselves immediately tell whether a recent discovery will stand secure is witnessed by the number of cases in which even the highest prizes for scientific research have been awarded for discoveries which later turned out to be false and the result of unfortunate misinterpretation. Though this happens in only a small percentage of cases (and even in these cases the recipient of the award usually deserves it on other grounds), the number is sufficient to show that scientists themselves often need more time to digest their discoveries than they take or are given. The popularizer can well afford to await the "jelling" of a scientific discovery.

There have been a few attempts to solve the problem of science popularization by putting together as authors an expert scientist and an expert writer, letting one furnish the dry flour of fact and the other the fluid milk of interest, so that together they might mix and cook a batter which the lay mind would find both appealing and digestible. Though this method sometimes gives encouraging results, it presents new difficulties; unless the collaboration is unusually complete, large lumps are likely to be left in the batter.

A recent book which illustrates such incomplete collaboration is "Stars and Men,"* by Stephen and Margaret Ionides. This work, the result of a fond collaboration between father and daughter, is so obviously a patient and happy literary excursion on which much care has been lavished that the captious reviewer is tempted to sneak off unobserved with his tail between his legs. Yet if two persons so admirably fitted for collaboration are unsuccessful in covering its traces, what is to be expected from a casual combination of author and scientist? The book is, indeed, delightful in many ways; it is filled to the jacket with useful information about the history and facts of astronomy, which is relayed to the reader in a lively, though rambling, style. Yet the collaboration is so imperfect as to produce frequent attacks of vertigo in the reader, and the attempted popularization is somewhat self-conscious.

"Stars and Men," while written with considerable skill, would have been much more readable if the authors had stuck more closely to the question at hand. To illuminate a discussion with flashes of imagination, to draw witty comparisons, to saunter through paragraphs mingling sober facts about the moon's phases with quotations from "Alice in Wonderland," these are all desirable and praiseworthy and the stuff of which good writing is made, but they must be done in such a way as to appear right, obvious, and unstrained; above all, they must not distract the reader from the subject under discussion. There can be no objection to mingling nonsense with science, provided the nonsense adds sense to the science. Otherwise it is as out of place and as useless as soft snowdrifts dumped between great boulders in a road in a misguided attempt to make the going easier.

The three recent books which have been selected to illustrate the faults to which science popularization is heir are all well above the average of their class, and can be recommended highly, with the reservations given. They were selected for comment instead of less distinguished books because the limitations of important works are of more consequence than those of the run of the mill.

True science popularization appears to consist of taking representative scientific facts and presenting them in a series of clear mental pictures, arranged to arouse the interest of the reader and widen his knowledge by association of new ideas with ideas already held. This end is best attained, not by artificial use of extraneous material, but by simplification of statement and by clarity of language.

*George Russell Harrison is on the faculty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and author of "Atoms in Action."*

**STARS AND MEN. By Stephen A. Ionides and Margaret L. Ionides. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1939. 453 pp., with index and 74 illustrations. $4.*

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# Toucans and Jaguars

*THE GREAT NATURALISTS EXPLORE SOUTH AMERICA. By Paul Russell Cutright. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1940. 340 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS J. HALLE, JR.

SURELY not the least of the enticements of South America for the traveler is its abundant and peculiar wild-life. Yet the layman, however much curiosity he may take with him on a visit, finds it constantly frustrated by the dearth of popular informative literature on the subject. In Africa, India, Australia—anywhere, in fact, where the English have colonized—he would find plenty of guides to the native birds and beasts; but not in South America. Only the Argentine, with its large number of English settlers, has received proper treatment in this respect.

Dr. Cutright has now done something to remedy this situation by summarizing in one volume the data gathered by naturalists on many of the principal varieties of the South American fauna. His introductory section, a forty-three-page history of nature-exploration in South America, besides being a record of high adventure and achievement, shows how little excuse has existed for the lack of information in popular form. This continent has, after all, been under the close observation of as distinguished a list of naturalists as could be identified with any other portion of the globe. Von Humboldt won his fame here; Darwin gathered, here, much of the material that has revolutionized our conception of nature; Wallace, the godfather of "Darwinism," devoted four years to South American exploration; Bates spent eleven years collecting in the Amazon basin; Hudson grew up on the pampas; and in our own day the work of these and other men has been brilliantly continued by such contemporary naturalists as Murphy and Beebe. The material is on record, but it is not, for the most part, available except in abstruse technical reports or in volumes of travel that have long been out of print and out of date.

The animals of South America are hardly less distinguished than the naturalists who have described them. What the latter had to say of the former, selected and predigested by Dr. Cutright, makes up the bulk of his book. Here, through the eyes of the naturalists, are the sinister vampire bats, the armored armadillos, the hoatzin, the howling monkeys, the cock-of-the-rock, the toucans, and other creatures peculiar to the New World, besides big cats, little gnats, and all sorts of cosmopolitan in-between sizes. Though Dr. Cutright fixes the place of each particular variety in the biological hierarchy, his main emphasis is on behavior, which is what interests the layman chiefly and is most subject to the clouding of legend. He takes the birds and beasts out of the zoos and, on the best authority of science, places them in their home-environments, explaining their habits in terms of their habitats.

The account suffers, to some extent, from being wholly academic. Never having explored South America himself, Dr. Cutright is hampered in discriminating between conflicting reports and estimating plausibility. But in one sense this sort of second-hand presentation of the old material is more needed than any exploration for new material, since a popular summary has been so long overdue. Here is probably the only single general and popular account of the animals of South America now available.

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By Elliot Paul

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# Ulrich B. Phillips and the Old South

*THE COURSE OF THE SOUTH TO SECESSION. By Ulrich Bonnell Phillips. Edited by E. Merton Coulter. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company.* 1939. 174 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE FORT MILTON

THIS volume, published for the Beveridge Fund of the American Historical Association, represents another essay of America's historians to appraise the emotional factors which led to the American Civil War. Dr. Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, its author, was a Southerner who started with the predilections of his geography, but grew out of them into a national attitude and then a philosophical approach.

He began his historical study in the particular, analyzing specific Georgia problems. After a few years he left the section, and at the University of Michigan became one of the lambent lights of post-Dunning interpretation. After a distinguished career there, Dr. Phillips went to Yale.

My own most vivid recollections of him come from Swarthmore, in the summer of 1934, when we both attended an inter-racial institute held under the leadership of Dr. Charles Johnson, of Fisk. Neither of us believed in the emotional ideologies of the radical racialists. Both of us believed that the Southern Negro had received grave harms and injuries, compounded somewhat by the belligerence of Negroes in other sections.

Dr. Phillips had just returned from a long sojourn in Africa where, as a historical anthropologist, he had studied the folkways, backgrounds, and social attitudes of Negro tribes from Uganda to Sierra Leone. This had given him new attitudes and capacities, a new sense of intellectual humility and emotional forebearance, for understanding and seeking better solution for the race problem, both in the South and in the nation as a whole.

A reading of this present volume gives one the feeling that here indeed was a man who could penetrate beneath the facts to the truth behind them. In actual content it consists of essays written in advance of his last definitive work, "Life and Labor in the Old South," which was planned as the initial third of his magnum opus. He expected the second volume to bring the picture of the shifting scene from the formation of the Federal Union to the schism of secession. The final work was expected to analyze and pass judgment on post-Appomatox developments.

The first segment was admirably performed. Dr. Phillips had done much spadework upon the second, but all too little distillation. It is couched throughout in his always lucid and exciting style, but without the general development that he so engagingly em-

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ployed in "Life and Labor." These essays, none the less, once more reveal a man who had grown beyond a Georgian, beyond a Southerner, really beyond a national man, to what historians must consider a world attitude and a world mind: a true seeker for the basic meanings of racial strife, sectional conflict, and national mood.

*George Fort Milton is the author of "The Age of Hate."*

# Memoirs of an Ex-Communist

*I CONFESS. By Benjamin Gitlow. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.* 1940. 611 *pp., with index.* $3.75.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

BEN GITLOW has the goods on the boys from the left side of the house and here he spreads them on the counter. That is the essential fact of a tome as weighty as a Thomas Wolfe novel—and it may be added, as repetitious and as wanting in excitement for those not concerned with a special phase of American life. The son of an immigrant Russian Jew, with a slum background and a bitter struggle for bare existence forced upon him in childhood, Gitlow became a Socialist Party worker while still in his teens. The age of independent thought came to him coincidentally with the intellectual bankruptcy of the Socialists at the time of the World War, and the rise of the bright new dawn in Russia. Already old and active enough to pull more than one-vote weight, he was one of the leaders in the movement that rent the old party to pieces and made the new Communist Party.

On the heels of this he was caught by A. Mitchell Palmer's bravos and sent to Sing Sing as the first communist prisoner, emerging (on a pardon from Al Smith) a party martyr of burning conviction, great energy, and some ability in the peculiar form of politics practised by the sect. But from that point on he began to discover that what happened to the American proletariat was far less important than who happened to be secretary of the party. The remainder of his story is one of ceaseless struggles among factions, and among factions within the factions, for party leadership and doctrinal control; struggles conducted with incredible pettiness and treacheries and usually ending with the arbitrament of Moscow. The methods and connections of the organization are laid bare to the last detail. So is its make-up, with convincing sketches of the leaders, as numerous as generals in a Latin-American revolution. If the sketches are touched with the acidulous malice of a disgruntled man, they are all the better for that; and if the tale of factional squabbles becomes tedious, it all the better explains why communists make more noise than they make converts.

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# Arts of the Indians

*INDIAN ARTS IN NORTH AMERICA. By George C. Vaillant. New York: Harper & Bros.* 1939. 52 *pages,* 96 *plates.* $5.

Reviewed by OLIVER LAFARGE

THE steady emergence of the North American Indian as a serious contributor to contemporary art, and not merely as a folk-practitioner of living antiquities, has called forth a parallel, increasing recognition here and in Europe. Symptoms and causes of this have been a variety of publications and notices, and exhibitions of varying importance. The most notable of these last have been the Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts in New York in 1932, and the magnificent exhibit of the government's Indian Arts and Crafts Board at the San Francisco Fair.

Meantime a considerable group of American artists has been urging that more be done to rescue Indian art in the public mind from the realm of anthropological oddities and folk-y sentimentality, for the "curio" association has, in fact, generated an ill-will towards this art among that public which alone will support the best work.

With impetus from the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, and coöperation from many sources, "Indian Arts in North America" comes out as an effective and timely publication. In his text, Dr. Vaillant achieves sound appreciation and brilliant summarization, together with an esthetic sensibility not always found in anthropologists. The result is lavish in illustration, clear, unsentimental, artistically important. It sets forth interestingly an art in the process of evolution, rooted in a long, distinctive past, reaching out today towards a significant place in our own general scene.

In view of its concept, it is unfortunate that the illustrations of painting of the "Southwestern nomads" (Navajos and Apaches) and Plains Indians should stop with examples of rock-paintings and paintings on hide from the early nineteenth century. These attractive, slightly quaint products should have been complemented or replaced by examples of the very excellent water-colors on paper done by young tribesmen in the current decade.

"Indian Arts in North America" is not aimed at anthropologists, or at people who have been bitten by the Indian bug. It is intended for those who are interested in beautiful objects regardless of their origin, a wide, sensitive public difficult to please. It should achieve its goal.

*Oliver LaFarge is co-author, with John Sloan, of "An Introduction to American Indian Art."*

### Erratum

In an issue of January 13 Prince Hubertus zu Loewenstein was inadvertently identified as the author of "Escape to the Present." He is the author of "Conquest of the Past," and of a forthcoming book, "Enemies of the Cross."

# Elizabeth and Her Merry Men

*THE ELIZABETHAN JOURNALS. Being a Record of Those Things Most Talked of During the Years 1591-1603. By G. B. Harrison. New York: The Macmillan Co.* 1939. 1,138 *pp.* $4.50.

Reviewed by CONYERS READ

IT is a nice business to catch and portray the drift of popular gossip in a time so remote as the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth. Some years ago Dr. Harrison attempted to do it by a device which, if not unique, is certainly unusual. He gathered together a hodgepodge of extracts from all sorts of contemporary records, cast them in a form which has some flavor of Elizabethan English, and put them forth as a sort of diurnal of events. What is now published in one volume originally appeared as three. There has been virtually no change in the text, though the illustrations in the earlier edition have been omitted.

To the scholar the book can hardly be satisfactory because, though it is based upon source material, it supplies no critical apparatus for evaluating the sources. To the lay reader a great deal of it will be obscure because the allusions in the text, lacking explanatory footnotes, will be lost upon anyone not already familiar with the details of Elizabethan history. It

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# The Criminal Record

**The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction**

| *Title and Author* | *Crime, Place and Sleuth* | *Summing Up* | *Verdict* |
|---|---|---|---|
| HUGGER-MUGGER IN THE LOUVRE *Elliott Paul* (Random House: $2.) | Hiram Evans, Miriam Leonard, and cast of extraverts solve theft of Watteau from Louvre and murder of mummified marquis. | Begins, as contribution to crime literature, where Salvador Dali leaves off in painting. Sober-minded readers strictly warned off. | Mad and merry |
| DEATH ON THE BOAT TRAIN *John Rhode* (Dodd, Mead: $2.) | Anonymous corpse on English train turns out to be missing millionaire. Waghorn, Hanslet, and Dr. Priestley go into huddle. | Deductive Dr.'s ability to shatter alibis pulls co-workers out of muddle and snares clever but too-confident killer. | Good formula job |
| THE GIRL WHO HAD TO DIE *Elizabeth Sanxay Holding* (Dodd, Mead: $2.) | Nineteen-year-old "Starry Eyes," more sinned against than sinning, finally goes to doom she predicted. No detective present. | Ocean liner and Long Island estate scenes of impassioned, sinister, and excitingly written exercise in cerebral horror. | Feverish |
| MURDER ON PARADE *Carolyn Wells* (Lippincott: $2.) | "Haunted" Maine farm scene of three slayings. Fleming Stone lays ghosts and puts finger on criminal. | Detective of many exploits here conquers not only hants and humans but Maine "coon" cat—new to crime fiction. | For Wellsians |
| WRITTEN IN DUST *Miles Burton* (Crime Club: $2.) | English small-town school official found dead in gas-filled coal cellar. Insp. Arnold and Desmond Merrion follow grimy clues. | Unfortunate propensity of killer for gilding lily finally leads sleuth to right solution after much fruitless labor. | Pedestrian |

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deals with too many different things to have any other continuity than the mere march of time, and the material is drawn from too many sources to reflect any single point of view.

Dr. Harrison wants us to believe that what happened behind the closed doors of the Privy Council, or what was set forth in the cipher dispatches of foreign ambassadors and in the confidential instructions of royal agents, was generally known and talked about. He wants us to believe that everybody heard what passed between Elizabeth and her favorites in the Privy Chamber, what Cecil said to Raleigh, what Francis Bacon whispered in the ear of Essex. Indeed he shows scant respect for the mysteries of state, the "Arcana" and the "Cabala," of which contemporary writers appear to have stood in such awe. And he attaches little importance to the royal prohibitions upon the free discussion of ticklish problems of policy. The law declared, for example, that no man should talk about the succession, or the Queen's marriage, or the religious settlement, or what went on in parliament, or what went on in Ireland. Yet Dr. Harrison prints long passages on all these subjects, based not upon material intended for general consumption, but upon material of the most confidential character. His excuse is that things have a way of leaking out, though he confesses that he has followed his own "instinct" in deciding what did leak out and what did not. In short, we have here, not a critical history of the period, not a carefully edited collection of source material on the period, but a synthesis of events and of items of information which he has a hunch were common knowledge. It had been better had he confined his attention to what he could demonstrate to have been generally known, to what was published in book or pamphlet or proclamation, to what was preached in the pulpit or sung in ballads on the street corners, or set forth in plays upon the stage. As it is, we should, perhaps, do well to classify this scrapbook of his with one of his own favorite books: "The C Merry Tales." At that, some of it is marvelously good reading, particularly if one does not care whether it be true or not.

*Conyers Read is in the department of history of the University of Pennsylvania.*

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# The New Books

## Biography

*THE LIFE OF MRS. GODOLPHIN. By John Evelyn. Edited by Harriet Sampson. Oxford.* 1939. 282 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Margaret Blagge's life was spent in a web of quiet conflict. In her station, it was almost axiomatic that she should become a maid of honor at the court of His Majesty Charles II. But the vanity of the world oppressed her, and she soon withdrew. Friends protested in vain. She wished to dwell apart, engaged in religious devotion, errands of mercy, and meditations on mortality. The thought of death was congenial to her, and she looked forward to the time when she might become a "Real Maide of Honour" among the angels. But in the meantime, what of her betrothed Sidney Godolphin? Should a husband come before God? After a decent interval of nine years, she finally married him. It was a happy marriage but a brief one: she lost her life in giving birth to the child she had prayed for. She was twenty-five years old. Among those left to mourn the loss of one who seemed little less than a saint was the immortal diarist John Evelyn, who had been her virtual adopted-father during the last seven years of her life. His grief and admiration he expressed in "The Life of Mrs. Godolphin," a memoir so beautifully written that it has become a minor classic.

After "The Life of Mrs. Godolphin" was first printed in 1847, it ran through several editions, for the Victorians appear to have regarded it as a primer of piety. Today its lessons seem less urgent, but its charm is as great as ever. Accordingly one is grateful for Harriet Sampson's editing of the Rosenbach manuscript, which is preferable in several respects to the Harcourt manuscript on which earlier editions were based. The present volume is provided with a complete critical apparatus (in extent greater than the text), and it bears every mark of scrupulous, intelligent editing.

A. C.

*LESTER F. WARD, THE AMERICAN ARISTOTLE. A Summary and Interpretation of His Sociology. By Samuel Chugerman. Duke University Press.* 1939. 591 *pp., with index.* $5.

In the Introduction by James Q. Dealey, who was Ward's associate at Brown University, this work is described as "a labor of love." It might almost be called a labor of adulation. Nevertheless, the author succeeds in giving us not only a remarkably clear picture of the man, but an excellent "summary and interpretation of his sociology."

Mr. Chugerman, it may be noted without prejudice, is not a professional sociologist, though his book is published under the aegis of a university and with the blessing of an impressive list of sponsors, including many professionals in sociology. Ward himself was hardly a sociologists' sociologist. He was a self-made man, who knew poverty and manual labor, struggled for an education and got it partly by incessant reading and partly by means of college courses, took degrees in law and theology, obtained a government clerkship in Washington, and rose to important posts in the fields of geological and botanical study. He wrote most of his treatises on sociology before he became a professor of the subject at Brown University only seven years before his death.

Thus he was, in a sense, a self-made sociologist. In doctrine, he emphasized the roles of opportunity and achievement in human life. He believed in the improvability of society by conscious effort, and stressed education as the chief means of progress—and incidentally, it was scientific information which he deemed of most importance. In his day he had an enthusiastic following among social workers, social reformers, and other humanitarians, who found in his environmentalism and meliorism a socially scientific justification of their faith and programs of betterment.

Government, in Ward's view, should be conducted as a function of social science and in the light of social science. President Hoover's research committees on social trends and problems, and even more so, the New Deal, were expressions, so far as method and purpose are concerned, of "applied sociology" as preached by Lester F. Ward. Mr. Chugerman gives evidence aplenty of Ward's contemporary and continued influence on American thought, though he might wisely have been less insistent on the permanent value and importance of the "pure" or theoretical aspects of the Ward sociology.

R. G. F.

## Fiction

*LISTEN TO THE MOCKING BIRD. By Hester Pine. Farrar & Rinehart.* 1940. 344 *pp.* $2.50.

In her dull but ambitious second novel, Hester Pine withholds the brand of lively, urbane dialogue that made "Beer for the Kitten" amusing in parts, and recounts much too long a stretch in the life of a tedious Texan, Caroline Talbot. We infer that Caroline's progress through the years is supposed to be clinically interesting, and that the book is intended to have artistic merit deriving from Miss Pine's conscientious scrutiny of her annoying heroine; however, "Listen to the Mocking Bird" proves neither point. It would be unkind, even so, to

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dismiss as wholly worthless any novel handled as earnestly as this. Although it has its share of truthful observation of the minutiae of American middle-class life, it suggests Sinclair Lewis on an off day. It's really too bad that there's no strong, vital undercurrent here to hold our interest.

Instead of telling an absorbing story or drawing engrossing characterizations, Miss Pine is content to give us extras, chiefly. Extras which, we are glad to say, are very nicely done. When it comes to sentences descriptive of objects about us, from food and drink to clothes and house furnishings, Miss Pine writes with her eyes open. But we don't feel that this is enough. The thread of the narrative is Caroline Talbot's life, which goes through three major stages, all extremely tiresome: childhood *gaucherie* underlined by the social success of a beautiful but empty-headed mother; the eager-young-wife or "growing-into-beauty" phase that authors like to employ for their ugly ducklings; and a final decline into the vacuum of a wealthy Suburbia, with Caroline well on the way toward duplicating her mother's silly, selfish existence. Hence the title. The trouble with this thread is that Miss Pine lets it become dreadfully weak. Number 70 cotton, as the detail-loving author would say. For the greater part, it's a case of trying characters resulting in a trying book, which not even a noble, upstanding *Ladies' Home Journal* husband and a conventionally eccentric great-aunt, those wheelhorses of fiction, are able to save.

J. R. P.

*ONE WAY TICKET. By Eugene O'Brien. Doubleday, Doran.* 1940. 269 *pp.* $2.

Eugene O'Brien has taken the United States Navy out of the pulp magazine class of writing. In his first novel, "He Swung and He Missed," and now in "One Way Ticket," he provides the first literate stories of the modern squadrons and their men. The new book, related in swift and economical style, is more objective and less autobiographical than the first. It is an engrossing one. The author's ideas may be open to debate—a mild term for the reception it will probably get from naval authorities—but they won't bother most readers.

Obviously O'Brien is an extremely sensitive person whose naval career was not only ill chosen but productive of a bitterness which pervades the pages of "One Way Ticket" as it did the predecessor. Most of his criticism is reserved for the rigid regulations and those who enforce them. Actually the officers herein do not come off badly. A domineering captain and one or two subordinates are mordantly drawn, but the others, including an amiable commander who figures in the early pages, are considered with the same sympathy bestowed on Kelly and his friends on the U. S. S. *Amazon,*

(*Continued on next page*)

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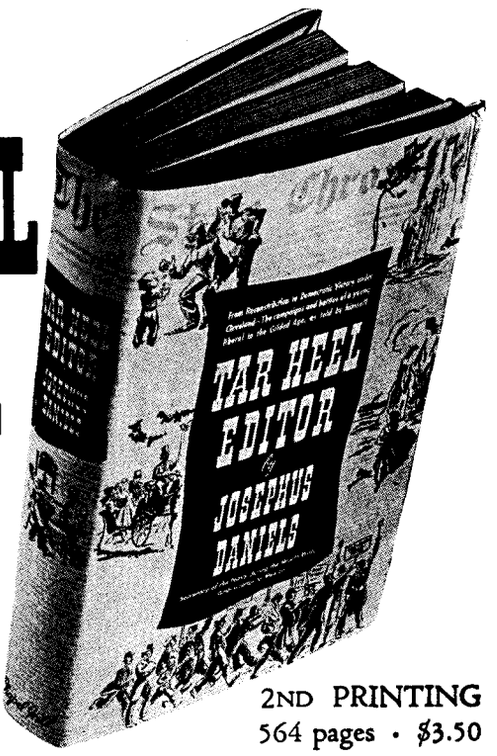


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—JOHN TEMPLE GRAVES, II, *This Morning*, **ASHEVILLE CITIZEN**

*The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C.*

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## The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

a destroyer anchored at Norfolk during the prohibition era. The lone female who mopes through the book, Kelly's wife, is never so vividly alive as the sailors.

The first half of "One Way Ticket" is a racy, authentic picture of life in the U. S. N., complete with esoteric phrases and technical terms that are perfectly understandable. But dire events follow the arrival of a mean skipper. The rapidity of these disasters will not dull the reader's interest, but anyone reasonably familiar with the service will feel that O'Brien's condensation of time makes them seem more contrived than true. The story becomes so tightly knotted in the last few pages that the sea-wise reader's imagination is often in danger of strangulation.

And yet O'Brien has such a flair for story-telling that in the breathless pace of the narrative one does not immediately cavil at the over-production of melodrama. He uses humor and pathos with a lack of sentimentality comparable to the best French reportage, and some episodes are remarkable for a full effect managed in a very economical way.

G. C.

## War

*ARMIES WITH WINGS. By James L. H. Peck. Dodd, Mead.* 1940. 274 *pp.* $2.50.

The current war, where most of the fighting has been in the air, seems destined to result in a formidable expansion of the literature of military aviation. This latest addition to the series is both one of the best-written and best-rounded surveys yet to appear. It bears the signature of a pilot with actual war experience (Spanish Civil War) and it notices such matters as the physical and psychological reaction of the flier, and the character of the ground force that supports him —which all others omit. This is both interesting and valuable; but unfortunately the remainder of the work is proportioned among items equally interesting and valuable, those interesting and peculiar, and theories that are horrifying and dubious. Mr. Peck thinks thermite is a liquid; he declares the Spanish battleship *España* was sunk by aerial bombs, that American anti-aircraft guns are of 105 mm. calibre, and that liquid air is a better explosive than TNT. On the theoretical side he rakes up the venerable nonsense about the vulnerability of warships to air attack being demonstrated by the *Ostfriesland* bombing, and declares an air force can overwhelm or disregard anti-aircraft artillery. Finally he puts forward a form of the Douhet doctrine which differs from the original only in suppressing the Italian general's contention that aerial bombardment will cause the nation that experiences it to force its military men to sue for peace. Instead he makes the airplane the arm of decision through the mere material damage it inflicts, which is farther than Douhet was willing to go. Too bad, but not the first time an otherwise good piece of writing has been pulled down by a few cockeyed chapters.

F. P.


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# Double-Crostics: No. 305

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | 1-J | 2-K | 3-F | 4-B | | 5-Q | 6-N | 7-R | 8-U | | |
| 9-V | 10-X | | 11-N | 12-R | 13-A | 14-B | | 15-M | 16-G | | 17-U | 18-P | 19-X | 20-H | 21-A | | | |
| 22-V | 23-W | 24-A | 25-C | 26-O | | 27-R | 28-O | 29-H | 30-P | 31-G | 32-U | | 33-I | 34-Y | 35-T | 36-H | | |
| 37-N | | 38-U | 39-T | 40-W | 41-I | 42-R | 43-V | | 44-K | 45-Q | 46-O | 47-H | 48-F | 49-P | 50-V | 51-S | | |
| | 52-E | 53-H | | 54-F | 55-J | 56-X | | 57-W | 58-R | 59-O | 60-Q | 61-X | | 62-Y | 63-O | 64-E | | |
| | 65-F | 66-L | | 67-M | 68-F | 69-C | | 70-D | 71-W | 72-V | 73-G | 74-E | | 75-G | 76-A | | | |
| 77-T | 78-D | 79-N | 80-P | 81-U | 82-J | 83-K | | 84-B | 85-N | 86-I | 87-W | 88-S | 89-Y | | 90-C | 91-N | | |
| 92-J | 93-U | | 94-U | 95-D | 96-M | 97-L | 98-V | | 99-B | 100-J | | 101-I | 102-N | 103-L | 104-M | 105-Y | | |
| 106-E | 107-R | | 108-A | 109-V | | 110-D | 111-O | 112-K | 113-T | 114-C | | 115-X | 116-S | | 117-W | 118-A | | |
| 119-U | 120-N | 121-H | 122-S | 123-R | | 124-F | 125-A | | 126-F | 127-K | 128-W | 129-G | 130-I | | 131-T | 132-F | | |
| 133-M | | 134-M | 135-D | 136-Y | | 137-U | 138-A | 139-Y | 140-B | | 141-G | 142-A | | 143-T | 144-J | 145-A | | |
| 146-I | 147-R | 148-D | 149-S | 150-N | | 151-Q | 152-Y | 153-U | 154-P | 155-E | 156-H | | 157-Y | 158-X | 159-K | | | |
| 160-W | 161-B | 162-T | | 163-U | 164-S | 165-D | 166-R | | 167-X | 168-J | | 169-W | 170-M | 171-B | 172-H | | | |
| 173-V | 174-S | 175-L | 176-T | 177-H | | 178-O | 179-L | 180-S | 181-F | 182-G | 183-N | | | | | | | |

### DIRECTIONS

*To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.*

*When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).*

**The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 19 of this issue.**

### DEFINITIONS

**A.** Russian composer (1891-).

**B.** Adorned (archaic).

**C.** Smallest of mergansers.

**D.** Kind of steak.

**E.** Aftersong.

**F.** People of dreamy indolence (Odyssey).

**G.** Character in "The Merchant of Venice."

**H.** Primary.

**I.** Screamed, as a bird.

**J.** Husband of Phaedra.

**K.** Unpretending.

**L.** One related on the mother's side.

**M.** Hopeless situation.

**N.** Held spellbound.

**O.** Play by Ben Jonson.

**P.** Nymph of the mountains (Gr. myth).

**Q.** Knowledge.

**R.** Made more close.

**S.** Warm welcome (2 wds.)

**T.** In first-rate manner (colloq.)

**U.** Apathetic; mediocre.

**V.** Resounding.

**W.** Exciting abhorrence.

**X.** Circuitous ways.

**Y.** First seer, interpreter of animal voices (Gr.)

### WORDS

118 145 138 13 24 76 108 21 125 142

140 14 171 99 84 161 4

25 114 69 90

135 95 165 70 78 148 110

106 155 52 64 74

48 124 54 132 181 68 3 126 65

182 141 129 31 16 73 75

47 29 156 36 172 53 177 121 20

130 41 101 33 86 146

1 55 92 82 168 144 100

2 112 44 83 127 159

175 66 103 97 179

133 15 67 134 96 170 104

183 79 120 91 102 6 11 85 37 150

46 59 111 178 28 63 26

154 80 49 18 30

5 45 60 151

58 12 27 123 42 147 7 166 107

180 122 149 116 164 174 88 51

131 176 143 113 35 77 39 162

81 32 8 119 39 163 17 153 94 93 137

50 22 72 43 98 9 109 173

71 128 87 160 23 57 40 169 117

115 61 167 158 19 56 10

139 136 34 62 157 105 152 89

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# Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

WE note with regret the death of Mr. J. Bertram Lippincott at the age of 82, chairman of the board of the J. B. Lippincott Company. Mr. Lippincott, who succeeded his brother Craige Lippincott as head of the family business, was one of the most respected seniors in the publishing world.

☞Old Q.'s greatest pleasure this week was in a letter from M. E. of the San Francisco Community Chest. She called our attention to a table of Average Weights of Women Insured by the Metropolitan Life Company—and the mischievous statistician had added a technical footnote that these weights were "unsmoothed figures." ☞Another delight was replacing (by honest purchase) our long vanished copy of that very fine book *Selected Essays* by the late Oscar W. Firkins (Univ. of Minnesota Press). ☞Mr. Firkins's essay "Man: A Character Sketch," is among our private list of Required Rereading. ☞We were startled to read of the young men arrested for conspiring agin the Government, and who didn't seem to know what it was all about; for Conrad, in his "The Anarchist" (v. *A Set of Six*) uses exactly that plot in a quite remarkable story. ☞*The Eagles Gather,* and its predecessor *Dynasty of Death,* are novels levelled against the munitions industry. Scarsdale Subscriber finds it amusing—and so does Old Q.—that in the photo of their author, Taylor Caldwell, printed in this *Review* January 6, Mrs. Caldwell is wearing prominently on her hat an emblem (3 linked circles) which is the replica of the Krupp trademark. ☞The solution is simple, however: if she will turn the ornament upside down it becomes the trademark of Ballantine's Ale.

☞The New York office of Stackpole Sons has organized itself into an independent publishing house under the name of Howell, Soskin and Company. The new imprint expects to show about 20 titles during 1940, beginning in March. They will also act as sales representation for Messrs. Stackpole. The officers are Frank Mannheim, William Soskin, Virginia Howell Mussey, Stanley Kunitz, and Ward Greene. ☞ One rewarding way of supporting the democracies is to keep in touch with the United French Publishers (address P. O. Box 8, Station D, N. Y. City), who are offering many most tempting bargains in spite of the war. In their latest bulletin is enclosed a message from Dr. J. J. Champenois, the head of the U. F. P., written from "Somewhere in the French Army." ☞Dr. Champenois says that in fairness to all the house in its transactions will peg the franc to its value as of pre-War, $0.0265, and adds appropriately the famous motto of Paris, *Fluctuat nec mergitur.* ☞Alfred A. Knopf has completed arrangements to publish a series of 26 letters by Mark Twain written to the San Francisco *Alta California* in 1867. These will be edited by G. Ezra Dane and Franklin Walker, who have both done research before in Mark Twain material. ☞Harcourt Brace will publish a selection from the writings of Heywood Broun under the title *Shoot the Works.* Mr. Broun's son Heywood Hale Broun is the editor.

☞On February 15 the Argus Book Shop of Chicago will move to its new quarters at 16 North Michigan Avenue. ☞An exciting beacon in the realm of poetry will be lit on March 7 when Oxford Press will issue the newly revised edition of the *Oxford Book of English Verse,* first published in 1900. ☞Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has added about 100 poems to the contents.

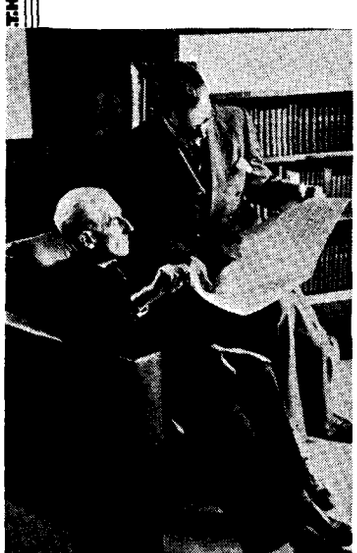
☞Among other titles that specially interest ourself in Oxford's Spring list we find *Pages from the Past* by H. A. L. Fisher, a volume of essays mostly on historical themes, including Mr. Fisher's famous speculation "If Napoleon Had Escaped to America." ☞ Moncure Biddle of Philadelphia, in his very agreeable pamphlet on early translators of Horace notes that the first published English version was that of Thomas Drant (1566) who called the Horatian satires *A Medicinable Morale.* ☞The first English translation of the *Odes* was John Ashmore's in 1621, and the Harvard Library owns a copy. ☞A pleasant passage to reconsider sometimes is in Wordsworth's *Prelude* (VI, 95) where he confesses that the books that he most valued as a college boy are still his dearest many years later. ☞We have an impression that *The Prelude* in its first and livelier form was not published until recent years, and is better read in its original version; perhaps some Wordsworthian will inform us about this. ☞Also even in our rusticity we hear rumors that the great University of Chicago variorum *Chaucer* (Manly & Rickert) is now available in a sort of photostat form, if we get any further information we will utter halloo. ☞Old Q. rarely visits publishing offices any more and only learns what most matters by grapevine and telepathy. ☞Perhaps Mr. De Graff who publishes the Pocket Books (which seem to be going to town) will remember good old G. H. Palmer's preface to the Poems of George Herbert in which he says "Most friends of the spirit speak from a pocket volume."

HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT. HOLT.

JUST PUBLISHED

*Bolero* THE LIFE OF *Maurice Ravel*

*by MADELEINE GOSS*



RAVEL'S life was an adventure in creative living. His musical career was like nothing so much as his own *Bolero,* a rhythmic, beautifully stimulating work of art. This telling of it—the first full-length biography of Ravel in any language—fills an important gap in musical knowledge.

Madeleine Goss is the first to have access to sufficient facts about Ravel's life and friends and music to write an authoritative book about him. Even her selection of illustrations is noteworthy, many of them having been taken specially for this book with the advice and help of Ravel's family. BOLERO also contains an accurate list of all Ravel's compositions, with the dates of their writing, publication, and first performance; a list of available recordings of his work; a bibliography and index. $3.00.

*HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY • NEW YORK*

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